

PlayStation plus

CROC

WATCH OUT MARIO!

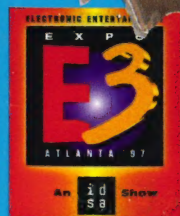
SYNDICATE WARS
ULTIMATE TIPS GUIDE

EVERY NEW
PLAYSTATION
GAME REVIEWED
AND RATED

TIME TO DIE!

**TIME CRISIS: THE BEST
LIGHTGUN GAME YET!**

E3: HOT
NEWS FROM
THE USA!



**GAME OVERLOAD! 150 AWESOME NEW TITLES
WHAT YOU'LL BE PLAYING IN '98! INCLUDING: FORSAKEN •
STREET FIGHTER EX PLUS • METAL GEAR SOLID • PANDEMONIUM 2 •
MARVEL SUPER HEROES • APOCALYPSE • AND CRASH BANDICOOT 2!**

"If comparisons must be made with
Loaded, Machine Hunter definitely comes
out on top" **PLAYSTATION PLUS 88%**



"Machine Hunter is
the game Loaded
should have been"
TOTAL PLAYSTATION



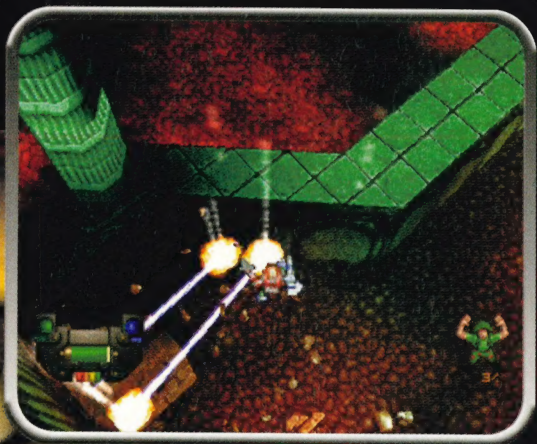
"A melting pot of mass
destruction, with an
inspired control system"
PLAY MAGAZINE

"A 3D blast fest"
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ABC
CONSUMER PRESS

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E3: The first chance to see 150 new PlayStation games. We were there.

The venue may have changed from glitzy LA to less than exciting Atlanta, but June 19th-21st were three days spent looking at all the forthcoming PlayStation titles. Anyone who is anyone was there, with Namco, Sony, Ocean, Virgin and Capcom all showing their latest wares. Our 22-page report brings you details of every game seen at the show, with the best titles singled out for special attention. *Metal Gear Solid*, *Marvel Super Heroes* and many more await you...



Time Crisis

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Taking a break from the 3D beat 'em up arena, Namco goes for its gun!

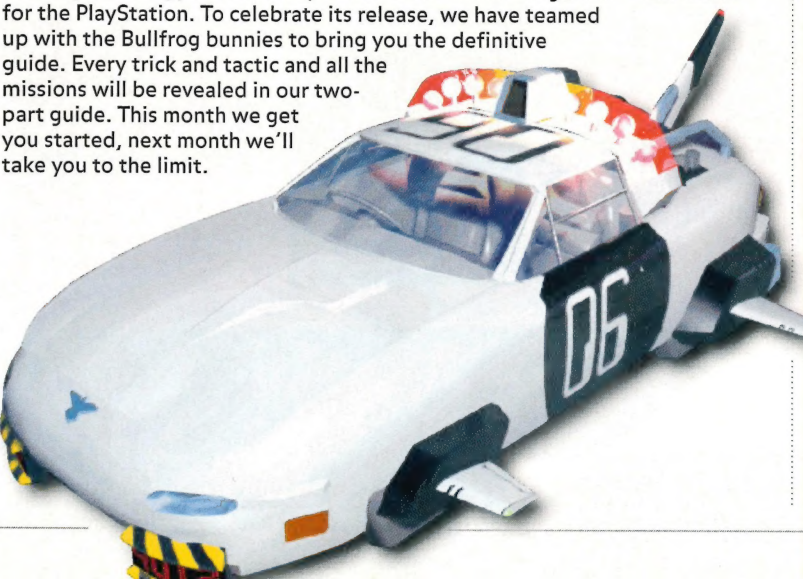
A young girl has been kidnapped by a gang of gun-toting maniacs. Sharp-shooting Richard Miller is the only man who stands a chance of getting her out alive. Two separate missions await Richard's skills, along with more bad guys than a dozen James Bond films. Armed with Namco's specially-created light gun, you are Richard Miller. This is *Time Crisis*.

Syndicate Wars Solved

72

How to beat one of the most eagerly awaited games of the year.

Bullfrog's strategy shoot 'em up is one of the best new games for the PlayStation. To celebrate its release, we have teamed up with the Bullfrog bunnies to bring you the definitive guide. Every trick and tactic and all the missions will be revealed in our two-part guide. This month we get you started, next month we'll take you to the limit.



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entertainment to Ed

The Greatest

ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT

E X P O



ATLANTA '97

An

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Show

computers

Interac
On

Inter
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Education

Show^{on} Earth!Atlanta's
Electronic
Entertainment
Expo

was memorable not for the stacks of games unveiled for the first time, or the nubile showgirls dancing down the aisles. Nope, E3 '97 will be remembered for one thing: the heat. Take an exhibition hall the size of ten football fields, fill it with over-heating consoles and mammoth TVs, then flood it with thousands of sweaty gamers hungry for a taste of the latest software. It wasn't a pretty sight, but the smell was even worse...

There were games though, hundreds of 'em. And for all the hype around the Nintendo 64, the PC and Saturn, the PlayStation still emerged as the machine best supported by software.

Over a hundred new games were on show, plus updates on the biggest titles of next year including Resident Evil 2 and the breathtaking Metal Gear Solid.

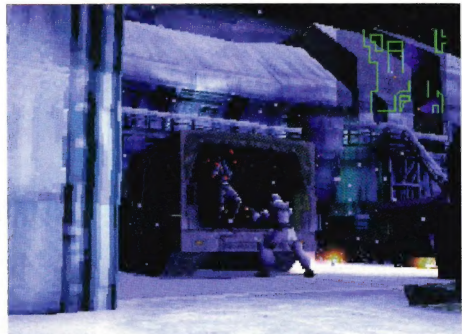
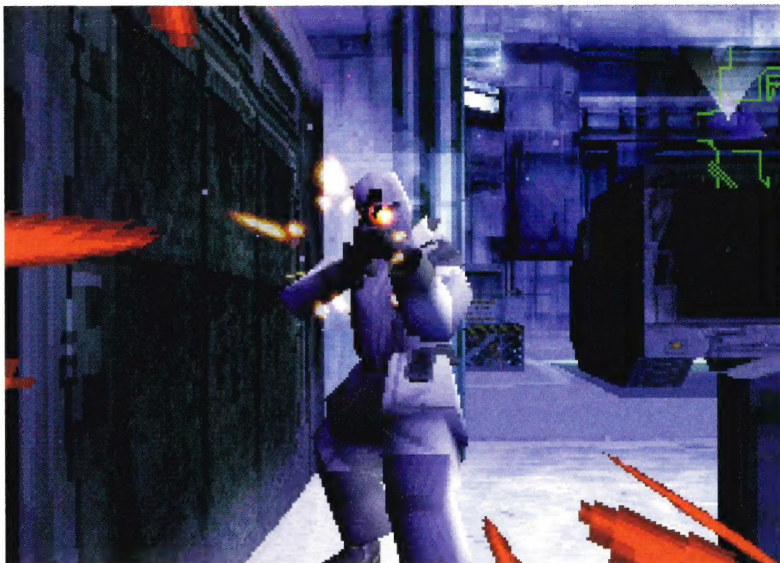
But enough of this. E3 was a videogame banquet with enough delights to satisfy even the hungriest gamehead.

Enjoy the feast...

Interactive
Digital
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Computers
et Education
imedia software

METAL GEAR
SOLID LOOKS
COO-EL. AS
SNAKE ENTERS
THE NUCLEAR
WEAPONS
PLANT HE'S
HUNTED DOWN
BY THE
GUARDS.
NATURALLY
THEY SHOOT
FIRST, ASK
QUESTIONS
LATER...



Metal Gear Solid

GO COVERT WITH KONAMI'S INTENSE SPY THRILLER

(LEFT) MEET SOLID SNAKE AND HIS LUSH COHORT, MERYL. SNAKE IS THE TOUGH GUY WITH THE GUNS, THE GAL IS HIS LOVE INTEREST.

KONAMI

Only one game drew a bigger crowd than the half-naked dancers which paraded around the show. Only one game was surrounded by damp carpet where the crowd either drooled or wet themselves with excitement. Only one game was the coolest mofo at the show... and it was *Metal Gear Solid*.

Metal Gear was first released on the MSX 2 a decade ago and introduced a whole new gaming concept. Up until then most games were mindless shoot 'em ups, but *Metal Gear* offered something new. Konami reckoned fighting was not the only way to play a game, and that stealth had its place too, so players were able to sneak through enemy lines and pick off targets rather than taking on the opposition as a whole.

Now, enter *Metal Gear Solid*, its 32bit incarnation.

Conceptually it remains faithful to its roots, casting the player as undercover spy Solid Snake, whose mission is to infiltrate a terrorist missile

base and eliminate the threat of a nuclear strike.

Stealth is of optimum importance, and the player must penetrate the base without being detected, set a string of explosives and then escape before the encampment is blown sky high.

Metal Gear Solid's style is best described as James Bond meets *Resident Evil*. It's set in the future so the visual flavour is very much like a science fiction movie.

Our hero, Solid Snake, is viewed from the third-person perspective, moving through a variety of fixed and scrolling locations. Camera angles automatically change to give the best view and are also used dramatically to create excitement and tension. The player can even switch to



MASTERS OF TERAS KASI LUCASARTS

Interest in *Masters of Teras Kasi* was understandably enthusiastic. However, the excitement surrounding the game was largely because it's a Star Wars tie-in, not because it excels as a 3D beat 'em up.

On paper the game sounds fantastic. It's standard beat 'em up fare, with a handful of familiar Star Wars heroes and villains kicking the crap out of each other in a series of one-on-one bouts. Fighters can summon The Force to pull off spectacular moves, or alternatively pull out a weapon and fire off a few blasts from afar.

Luke Skywalker leads the Rebel assault, joined by Chewbacca, Han Solo and Princess Leia. The bad guys are out in force though, with Darth Vader spearheading the attack. Boba Fett also rears his ugly head, along with a Tusken Raider and a Gamorrean guard named Thok. LucasArts has also introduced a new character called Arden Lyn, a master of the martial art teras kasi who is out to destroy the Rebel Alliance.

Each of the characters has been rendered in 3D and the animation has been created using motion-capture. However, at this early stage *Master of Teras Kasi* is looking a little shaky. The fighters move awkwardly, attacking with all the fluidity of a stop-motion animated cartoon. It will get considerably better, LucasArts assures us, with flowing attacks and combos, plus intuitive special moves. *Masters of Tera Kasi* isn't due for release until Christmas so there's still a few months left to add the final touches. PlayStation Plus is optimistic that LucasArts will rectify the gripes currently dogging the game, otherwise this slapfest will suffer a beating from the hands of our reviewers. LucasArts, better be warned!



(TOP LEFT)
DURING ONE
OF THE MANY
SMART ACTION
SEQUENCES
SNAKE PLANTS
A LINE OF
BOMBS, THEN
RUNS FOR
COVERS AS
THEY EXPLODE
IN TURN. IT
REALLY IS
SUPERB.



first-person view when using hi-tech equipment like the bino-goggles. When in use these can zoom in on distant objects, giving Snake the chance to plot his route into the missile base without being detected.

Graphically *Metal Gear Solid* sets a new standard in PlayStation gaming. Because of the roaming camera it's a lot more versatile than, say, *Resident Evil*, but also creates a tense atmosphere simply with clever camera work. Lighting effects are used extremely well too, especially during one of the fight sequences with a bad guy called Ninja. He's kitted out with a Predator-type suit making him almost invisible to the human eye and uses his cover to run in close and

attack with his sword. The effect, as he somersaults through the air closely followed by a trail of bullets fired from Snake Solid's sub-machine gun, is absolutely stunning.

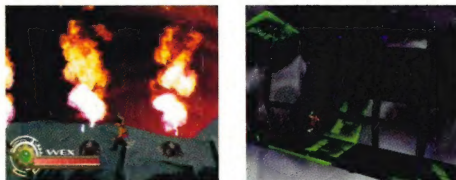
The slick presentation is complemented by involving gameplay and a compelling plot. The *Metal Gear Solid* environment is filled with artificially intelligent characters who interact with Snake and affect the outcome of the game. Rescue the delicious Meryl for example, and Snake could have found love at first sight. Well, at least it's not all blood and gore...



WILD 9 INTERPLAY

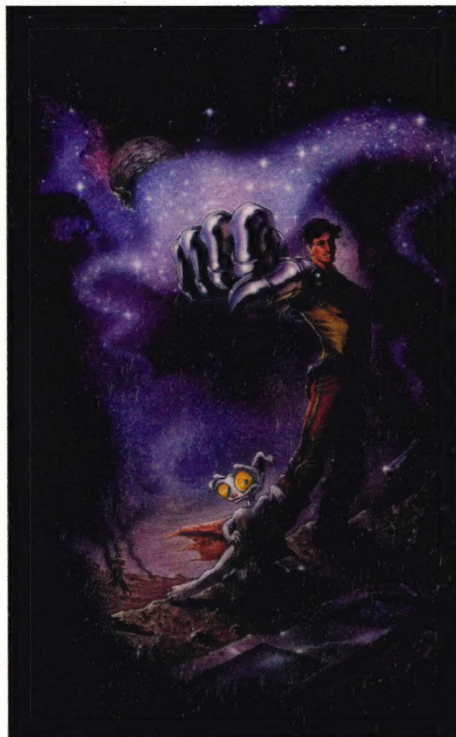
Shiny Entertainment's 3D platformer is progressing very nicely indeed. As leader of the *Wild 9* heroes, Wex must rescue his eight fellow compatriots. They're being held captive by the evil nasty thing Karn, a living face the size of two football fields. It gets even weirder, as Wex is confronted by a massive metallic creature called Tank, who hunts his prey using sonar. And then there's Filbert, the eight-foot frog that batters its opponents with huge maces! The nine levels are varied both in terms of presentation and gameplay, plus there are loads of

wacky monsters to test out Wex's awesome power glove which he's affectionately nicknamed The Rig. This is 3D platforming at its best. Watch out for it...



BLASTO SONY

He's brave, he's bold, he's... Captain Blasto. The PlayStation welcomes its newest hero, a muscle-bound meathead who has come to save the earth from impending doom. Using smart laser guns and devastating wit, Captain Blasto is the only hero who's man enough to fight off Bosc the Terrible and his army of alien onionheads. The game is a 3D platformer set across eight bizarre worlds, each of which is based on classic 40s cartoons. The result is a visually unique experience, as Blasto strides across the stylised 3D environment. The game area is huge and Blasto is free to roam wherever he wants. There's danger around every corner though, so just make sure you run in the opposite direction!



RESIDENT EVIL: DIRECTOR'S CUT CAPCOM

Take the already blood-spattered *Resident Evil*, immerse in a vat of severed limbs and intestinal trails and shrink-wrap in a film of rotting flesh. The result? *Resident Evil: Director's Cut*, a gore-heavy nightmare that returns to the haunted house deep within Raccoon Forest. *Resident Evil: Director's Cut* contains the original UK release, an uncut version plus the all-new enhanced game. Improvements include new character outfits and camera angles, plus a new monster and weapon. Also included is a demo of *Resident Evil 2*, so while additions to the original may be minimal, it's almost worth it for a sneak preview of 1998's hottest game.

NAGANO WINTER OLYMPICS '98 KONAMI

After the fantastic *International Track & Field*, the Konami sports range is turning its attention to the snow-capped spectacular of next year's Nagano Winter Olympics. The game is currently being developed by the team responsible for *Track and Field*, and the same level of skill and excitement is expected of this all-new follow-up. *Nagano Winter Olympics '98* will be a one-player game but is most enjoyable in the multiplayer competition, taking on up to three other athletes. Although the final event roster has yet to be confirmed the game will definitely feature freestyle skiing, bobsled, luge, the downhill and the ski jump. Motion-captured animation ensures *Nagano Winter Olympics* will be visually realistic as well as fun to play.



MARVEL SUPER HEROES CAPCOM

Fantastic! One word which describes Capcom's conversion of the number one arcade smash. Early PlayStation code was up and running, and already it looks very impressive. Visually the conversion is spot on, boasting massive character sprites, some cool effects and all the fighters from the original coin-op. It's not running as fast as its arcade parent at the moment though, but this will change with optimisation - when the game finally comes out it's likely to be virtually identical to the original game, both graphically and in terms of gameplay.

For the uninitiated, *Marvel Super Heroes* is a 2D beat 'em up in classic *Street Fighter II* vein, taking the Marvel licence used for *X-Men: Children of the Atom* a step further. Ten of Marvel's toughest super heroes are gathered here, including Captain America, the Incredible Hulk, Spider-Man, Psylocke and X-Men geeza Wolverine. Naturally there's a handful of super villains to chin, led by metalhead Doctor Doom. His underlings - who include fat bloke Juggernaut, Magneto, Shuma-Gorath and Blackheart - are the first line of resistance any would-be hero encounters, defeated in turn in the search to discover the Infinity Gauntlet. The bearer of this all-powerful glove has infinite power at their fingertips, so it's a race against good and evil to see who gets the mighty mitten first.

Marvel Super Heroes is overloaded with attacks and special moves, many of which are unique to each character. Capcom has introduced infinity gems to the game as well. When collected they reward the holder with a special ability - some slowly restore energy, others increase the strength of each attack. The Infinity Gauntlet is only uncovered when all six gems have been found, so only then can evil deity Thanos be defeated.



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Resident Evil 2

ZOMBIE COPS ON THE RAMPAGE IN RACCOON CITY

CAPCOM

Before E3 kicked off the word on the grapevine was that Capcom was going to have a playable version of *Resident Evil 2* on show. There wasn't. Instead a rolling demo was displayed, the very same demo version that's being bundled with

severed torsos along the floor to get close enough for an ankle bite!

The nightmare begins in Raccoon City police station, usually a safe haven but now a hell-hole overrun by zombie cops looking for a bite of fresh meat. Armed initially with a pistol, the battle is tense. Rotting corpses stagger from all directions, lunging at the hapless heroes. Manage to stay alive long enough and the armoury brings salvation in the form of better weapons. The shotgun and high-powered pistol can stop a bad guy at short



GHOST IN THE SHELL THQ

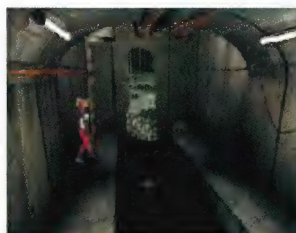
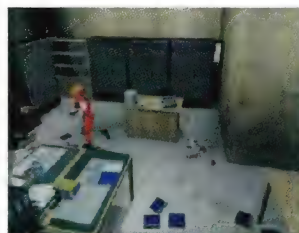
Currently the object of much critical acclaim in Japan, *Ghost in the Shell* is the bizarre new shoot 'em up due from THQ this winter. Based on the Manga film of the same name, the game centres around the movie's personal combat pods (called Fuchikomas, apparently). Agents climb inside these mobile guns, chasing down terrorists who are equipped with similar hardware. Although this may sound like pretty standard fare, *Ghost in the Shell* is unique in that the pods are extremely versatile. As well as trundling along the ground, they can also scale pretty much any surface, so battle often takes place while climbing up the side of buildings and so on. Naturally it's crammed with tons of anime-style visuals, including loads of pre-pubescent cartoon girls. Sounds just dandy.



Resident Evil: Director's Cut. But what the heck, already it looks cool. In the two short minutes of footage that was actually shown, *Resident Evil 2* looks to be the super-sequel Capcom promised.

The first noticeable difference between this sequel and the original is the level of the gore. Capcom has upped the body count in *Resident Evil 2* so now there's a lot more blood flying than before. Zombies are bagged in a shower of crimson as rookie cop Leon Walker and Claire Redfield (Chris' sister, presumably) fight off the undead

army, blowing them in two with the shotgun and covering the walls in a sticky spray of viscera. The zombies aren't easy meat either, even when they been ripped in half. Incredibly they still keep coming, dragging their



range, but the sub-machine gun is the only thing that will bring down some of the bigger and meaner zombies later in the game.

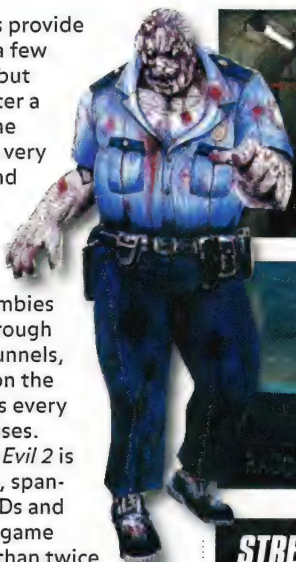
Having worked through the cop shop it's out into the city streets, which are also teeming with afterlife. It's not just undead policeman patrolling this area either, with spooky spider-like creatures and lumbering demons crawling from the darkness.





The sewers provide safety for a few moments, but seconds later a ball of flame ignites the very walls around the player! it's gripping stuff, as flaming zombies stagger through the dank tunnels, closing in on the two cops as every second passes.

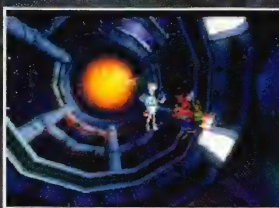
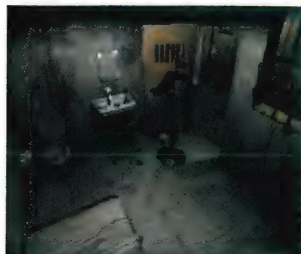
Resident Evil 2 is a big game, spanning two CDs and boasting a game area more than twice the size of the original. Capcom has added a lot more surprises too, with zombie ambushes likely to scare the shit out of even the bravest gamer. Dramatic camera angles and a cinematic musical score are also used to increase atmosphere, so this is no game to play with the lights off. Or without rubber pants... Be afraid.



RESIDENT EVIL 2: BIGGER, BETTER AND, AS THESE SCREEN SHOTS SHOW, EVEN MORE GORGEOUS LOOKING. BUT WHAT WE REALLY WANT TO KNOW IS, ARE THEY GONNA IMPROVE THE GODDAMN ACTING?

STREET FIGHTER EX PLUS CAPCOM

Capcom's PlayStation conversion of this slick coin-op is already looking creamy. Six of the original *Street Fighter II* characters are rendered in 3D, joined by 10 all-new fighters including the spooky Skullomania and the boyish Doctrine Dark. Gameplay remains intact for the conversion, plus a few extra bits have been squeezed in the PlayStation game. Sakura will feature even though she wasn't in the arcade original, along with handy bendy geeza Dhalsim. Bonus stages have also been included with fighters punching through waves of rolling barrels to notch up high scores. Boss characters are also accessible, making this the most exciting *Street Fighter* instalment for years.

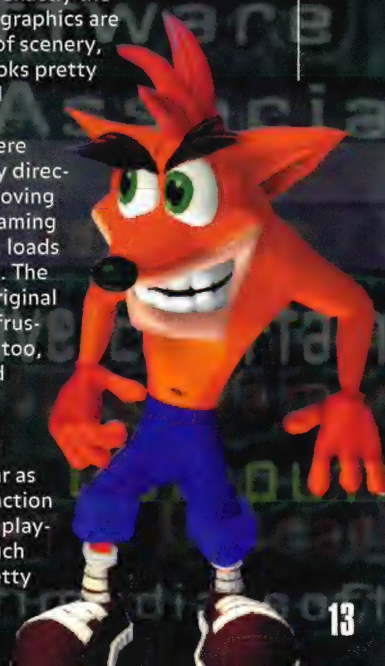


CRASH BANDICOOT 2 SONY

Crash Bandicoot was a nice little earner for Sony. Some hated the damn game, others loved it, but either way it earned a packet. A sequel was inevitable then, and this Christmas marks the return of the madcap marsupial to PlayStation. Original developers Naughty Dog step into the coding seat for the sequel, creating a game that takes the best bits of the first *Crash Bandicoot* and adds a whole load of new stuff.

Once again nutty professor Neo Cortex has flipped, creating yet more bizarre creatures for Earth-conquering duties. The boy Bandicoot is integral to his megalomaniacal plans, but guess what...? Crash ain't siding with no nutcase. Instead he's back to thwack Cortex and his psycho sidekick, Nitrus Brio.

Initially *Crash Bandicoot 2* looks exactly the same as the first game. Okay, the graphics are even better and there's a change of scenery, but the structure of each stage looks pretty similar. There are levels that scroll from left to right, and others that move in and out of the screen. There are even stages that move in every direction, but Crash is still limited to moving down corridors - this is no free-roaming 3D platformer like *Croc*. However, loads of improvements have been made. The game isn't as unforgiving as the original and is therefore nowhere near as frustrating. There's a lot more variety too, as Crash slips on a rocket pack and flies through parts of the game. There's also a makeshift jet ski to ride, plus loads of new moves and combos to try out. It's not as linear as the first game either, and uses junction rooms to join levels and allow the player to tackle the game in pretty much any order they please. Sounds pretty good to us.





BLOOD, BIKES AND PILLAGING ON A DESOLATE FUTURE EARTH

ACCLAIM

Forsaken is the fruit of Acclaim's ongoing relationship with Croydon coders Probe. Set in the future when

Planet Earth is just a lifeless hulk left devastated by nuclear experiments, the charred remains are now home to hundreds of scavengers all looking for loot.

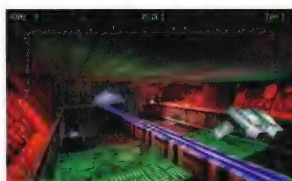
You're one of these mercenary thugs whose only means of survival is to rummage through abandoned settlements in the hope of finding useful weapons, ordnance and any other items of value.

Sadly for you, that's what just about every other mutant on the planet is doing too, so all hell breaks loose and the laser bolts start flying.

Forsaken is a first-person perspective action game similar to *Descent*. Well, similar insofar the game is set below

the Earth's surface as hundreds of scavengers fight it out in the maze of mine shafts. All similarities to Interplay's underground blaster, however, end there. *Forsaken* is no clone and it's sure as hell isn't a standard rip-off of an old PC game. Nope, it represents a considerable leap forward both in terms of graphical achievement and gameplay.

The game engine is incredi-



ble. Whereas *Descent* could be slow and jerky, this cutie is super-smooth and very, very fast. Each of the scavengers rides around on a pionicycle, an anti-gravity bike capable of trouser browning

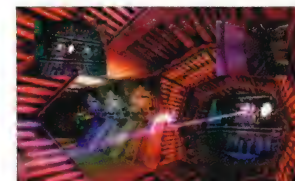
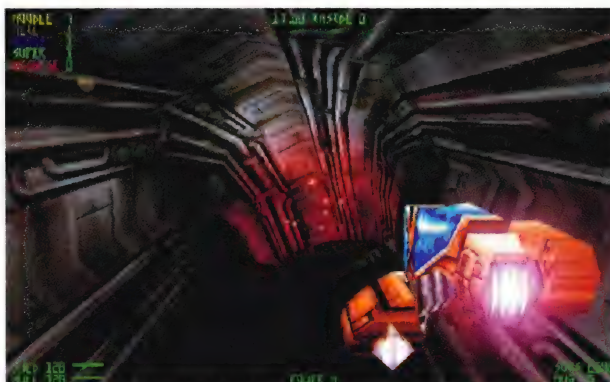


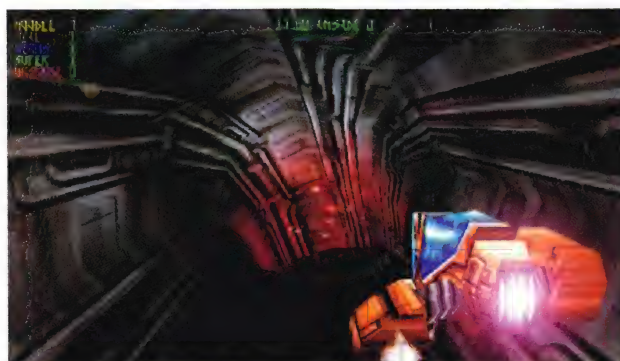
speeds. There's barely time to brake before power-sliding through the tight tunnels, but luckily these bikes are agile machines. They handle differently too, depending which scavenger gang you



decide to join with.

No matter which team of mercenaries you side with there are still loads of weapons to play around with. Each pionicycle carries an array of 25 offensive sys-





tems, from heat-seaking missiles that track targets through the weaving mine-shafts, to laser cannons and bombs that are dropped behind the bike to persuade any pursuing thugs to give up the chase. Extra weapons and ammunition supply power-ups are scattered throughout all 15 levels.

The visual style varies from one stage to the next, and little puzzles are subtly introduced during the later stages of the game.

Forsaken is still an outright shoot 'em up, though. The aim of each gang is to loot as much stuff as possible, and the best way to do this is to frag the ass off the opponents first, then go and get

the goodies. With over a dozen other cyber vultures kitted out with the same level of hardware technology, it's never quite that easy.

Still, if it gets too tough battling it out against skilled drone bikers, switch over to the multiplayer game.

PlayStation *Forsaken* will boast a split-screen mode with eight dedicated arenas, so this is one game where two heads are most definitely better than one.

BATMAN & ROBIN ACCLAIM

As box office sales go ballistic for the movie, the *Batman & Robin* batwagon gains pace with the imminent release of the video game. It's a 3D action game in which the player controls either Batsy himself or one of his two counterparts, namely Robin or the shapely Batgirl. Bad guy Mr Freeze teams up with Poison Ivy to drag Gotham City back to the ice age. Only the the cod-pieced trio can stop 'em, solving puzzles and going kick crazy in a fight through Gotham's vast cityscape. The game is crammed with Bat-gadgets galore, including some pretty cool chase sequences dumping the player in the hot seat of the Batmobile. Cool.



GET YOUR OCULAR KIT AROUND THESE SCREENSHOTS. FORSAKEN'S GOING TO BE A PLAYSTATION BIGGIE BECAUSE IT'S FAST, IT PLAYS LIKE A DREAM AND IT LOOKS HOTTER THAN A FRESHLY BAKED POP TART.

GEX: ENTER THE GECKO T-BMG

Okay, okay, so the original was a bit naff. But trust us, the sequel looks really cool. For starters, it's not the standard 2D platform game of old. Nope, this fella is a fully paid-up member of the 3D arcade adventure posse, to the point where even Mario 64 is getting a bit worried about 32bit competition!

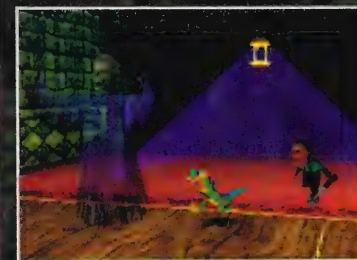
Yup, *Gex* is back and this time he's rendered. The wise-cracking gecko has undergone a major revamp, dispensing with his old image and adopting an much more credible guise. The result? Well, *Gex* is now a pretty cool character. Better still, the game looks fantastic!

What developer Crystal Dynamics has basically done is take the original game and transform it into 3D. Therefore a lot of the level styles and enemies will be familiar to owners of the original *Gex*. A lot of the stages are also influenced by Hollywood and are often parodies of popular movies. This level of humour is taken a step further with the voiceovers, provided by the American HBO comedian Dana Gould.

But for all this next-generation technology and 3D malarkey, BMG and Crystal Dynamics is still insisting it's the *Gex* character that will drag the gamers in. True, the lizard has more charisma than ever before and looks much more life-like thanks to a staggering 3,000 frames of animation. And he can still perform gravity-defying stunts

using his suction-cupped paws and agile tail.

But no matter how good the game is, *Gex* has still to convince PlayStation owners that he's cool. OK, his past is tarnished, but we reckon he's up to it...



a poem about

Bubbles

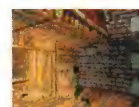
by Purple Ronnie

Vimto is a smashing drink
So why not have a slurp
It's full of fizzy bubbles
That will make your bottom burp



as drunk
by Purple Ronnie

IN *TOMB RAIDER 2* LARA GETS TO GO WALKABOUT IN THE STREETS OF VENICE, CREATED IN SUCH LOVING DETAIL THEY'RE EVEN BETTER THAN THE REAL THING. PERHAPS.



Tomb Raider 2

LARA CROFT: NOW TWICE AS BIG AS BEFORE...

CARDINAL SYN

The beat 'em up arena is already heavily overcrowded, but Sony's newie has something pretty special to offer. *Cardinal Syn* may be the first gored-up 3D fighter on the PlayStation, but it's the environments in which the battles take place that are most impressive. They're visually slick and potentially lethal, with fighters avoiding background obstacles as well as the attacks of their opponents. The characters are huge too, standing almost as tall as the screen and moving with incredible fluidity. *Cardinal Syn* is an impressive game then, as two monster warriors battle it out with swords, axes and maces. Magical attacks are available too, pulled off using familiar button and Dpad combos. It's not due out until 1998 though, so until then it's back to *Soul Blade*...



EIDOS

It's arguably the sequel of the year and marks the return of the PlayStation's hottest babe, Lara Croft. Yup, *Tomb Raider 2* is the next biggie from Eidos Interactive, which is hoping the all-new sequel will reach the same staggering level of success as the original. She may already have made a whopping £7.6 million this year but this time round Lara has set herself sights on a cool £10 million. She'll probably do it too. Not just because *Tomb Raider 2* is a piece of coding genius, but also because she's one hot chick with great things in front of her (arf arf).

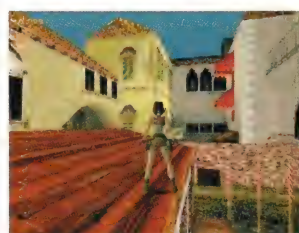
But enough of Lara, this is *Tomb Raider 2* and it's a whole lot better than the first game.

Lara is once again on the trail of a precious ancient artifact which is believed to be hidden deep within the Emperor's Palace at the Great Wall of China. This archaeologist lark isn't as easy as it looks though and

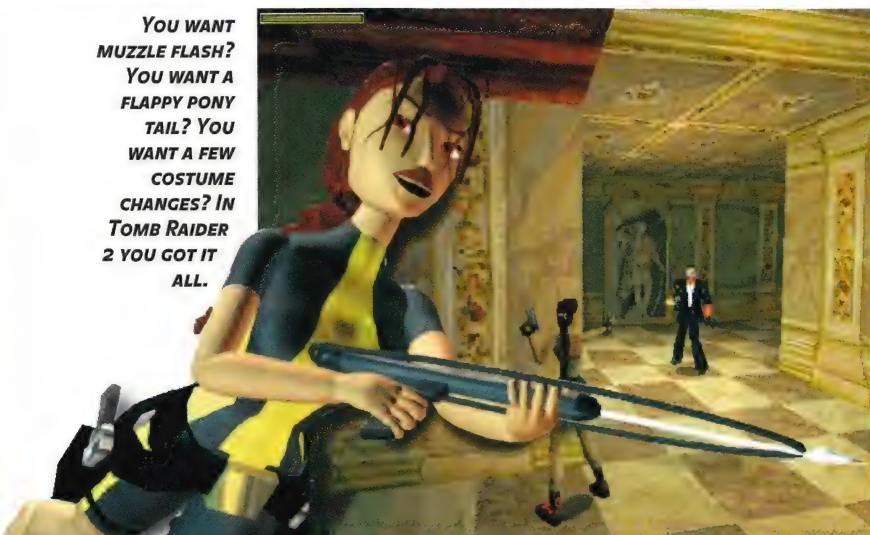
before long Lara has hit a stumbling block. There's no way in. This sort of puzzle is common in *Tomb Raider 2*, and can only be solved by thoroughly exploring each of the massive levels. This time Lara has a lot more freedom to search her environment by using her gymnastic skills to jump to higher platforms and cling to tiny ledges. She can

now climb vertical surfaces too, using suitable hand grips to latch onto and pull herself to the top.

Swimming plays a much bigger role in the sequel, especially when Lara flies off in search of clues at the waterlogged city of Venice. The murky depths hold many secrets, but are also home to giant sharks and other under-



YOU WANT MUZZLE FLASH? YOU WANT A FLAPPY PONY TAIL? YOU WANT A FEW COSTUME CHANGES? IN *TOMB RAIDER 2* YOU GOT IT ALL.



water nasties. Luckily Lara carries a harpoon gun as part of her new arsenal and is also kitted out with a sexy wet-suit and flippers. In fact there are a lot more costume changes in the follow-up, with the buxom brunette switching from her signature skimpy vest and brown kecks to the swimwear and even a thick fur-lined coat for snow-laden areas of the game.

In addition to the overall visual changes featured in *Tomb Raider 2*, Core has also added a number of other neat details. Most noticeable is Lara's long ponytail, which now flaps around as she runs. Dynamic and real-time lighting have also been incorporated. Flash from her gun muzzle will light up dark corridors, while the sun will rise and fall as Lara gradually makes her way around any exterior locations.

And there's more... The 3D engine has been refined so clipping is improved and the camera angles no longer move uncontrollably. Stacks of hidden rooms ensure replay value is maximised, and there's even a rumour about the inclusion of some sort of vehicle. Hmm, sounds awesome.



COOL BOARDERS 2

SONY

Sony is back on the piste, and this time it's brought its mates. Yup, *Cool Boarders 2* is the bigger, better brother of the first game, and includes an avalanche of improvements over the original outing. The most obvious difference is the addition of other boarders. No longer are the slopes devoid of life as eight competitors race down each run. Plus there's the opportunity to take on a human opponent in the multi-player game. A selection of new courses have been included along with fresh characters and individual boards. The half-pipe is pretty smart too and allows boarders to pull slick tricks while taking in those big air jumps.



E3 GIVES THE CREAM OF THE INDUSTRY THE CHANCE TO SHOW OFF THEIR WARES. NATURALLY, GIANTS LIKE EA DON'T MISS OUT...

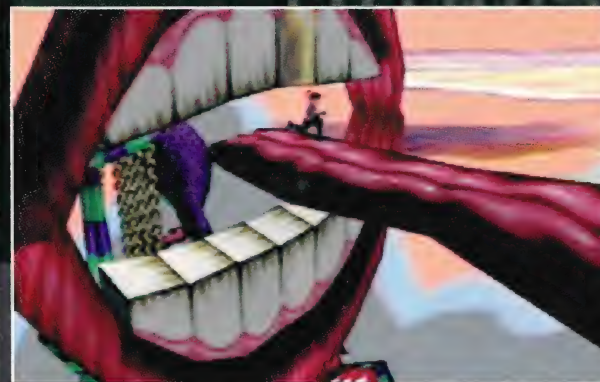
PANDEMONIUM 2

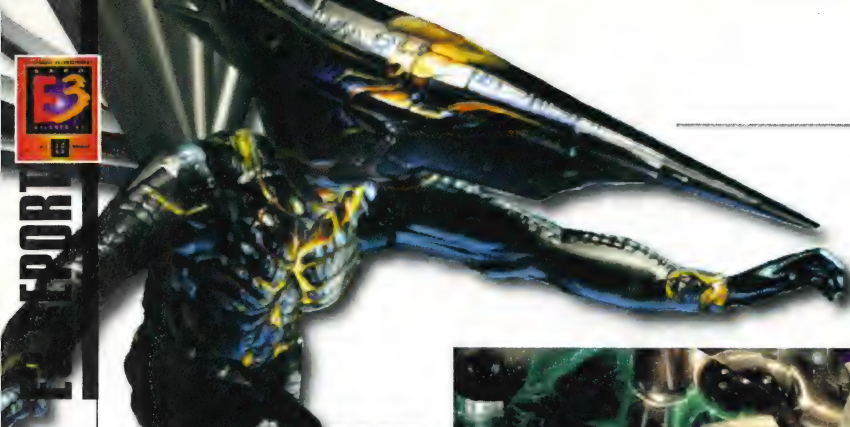
BMG

Crystal Dynamics set the pace for the 32bit platformer with *Pandemonium*, now it plans to up the ante with an all-new sequel. *Pandemonium 2* is set a few years after the first game, re-introducing whacked-out jester Fargus and a more, um, developed Nikki into the fray. Naturally their magic skills and attacks have been refined since the first game, and both Fargus and Nikki have learnt new moves and abilities which prove vital for completing some of the trickier levels. A new character also debuts in *Pandemonium 2*, namely a puppet on a stick called Sid!

Technically the game is a big improvement over the original, although at first it looks all too similar. Once again the levels mainly scroll from left to right, but this is all the more exciting thanks to the roving camera which rotates around the action giving a great feeling of depth to each level. The puzzle element of the game has also been beefed up, so each world is now a lot more involving. Rather than just running from one end of the level to the other, switches must be pushed and levers pulled in the right order to open up gates leading to the next section of the game.

Graphically *Pandemonium 2* has been painted with the same psychedelic brush that visualised the first game and light-sourcing has been used to create a truly bizarre world. This acid-trip flavour is complemented by a jungle soundtrack, a pounding beast that matches the in-ner-face action of the game.





STEEL REIGN SONY

Top tank action from Sony. Climb inside a futuristic battle tank and blow the crap outta the enemy with big missiles. Gameplay is action-based rather than straight simulation, fighting either a computer-controlled opponent or facing off against another human player. Nine theatres of war (plus six specific to the split-screen game) offer a varied battleground, from the densely populated city streets to the desolate sandy plains. Graphically *Steel Reign*, erm, reigns supreme, with loadsa meaty tanks 'n' stuff trundling across detailed landscapes. Each vehicle can be customised too, so there's no limit to the size of the gun strapped to the side of the tank.



MDK INTERPLAY

MDK is still a long way from completion. The version on display was just 40% complete so looked a bit ropey. However, the basic game structure was up and running, and already PlayStation *MDK* had all the essential elements of the PC classic. It moves well, but tends to stutter when the screen becomes crowded with enemies. This problem should be ironed out when the code is optimised, though. Other aspects like sniping and free-fall sections have yet to be tidied up too, but both should be as slick as the PC original when the game is released around Christmas.



CART WORLD SERIES SONY

This is Sony's own Indy Car game, developed in the big ol' US of A. Imagine Formula 1 racing with simpler circuits and drivers with ridiculous names like Randy Buttnugget and you get the basic gist of what this baby is all about. The cars apparently handle like the real thing thanks to advanced vehicle physics, allowing for spectacular crashes when rookie drivers blouse it on the first corner.

Over 10 Indy Car circuits have been faithfully recreated and crammed in the game. Naturally there are stacks of views to choose from, plus all the constructors and drivers from the recent Indy Car season. Murray Walker has opted out of the commentary though, replaced by the strangely named Chip Stickenackelberger. Whoever he is.



PITFALL 3D: BEYOND THE JUNGLE ACTIVISION

Pitfall Harry's PlayStation outing is an impressive beast. It's a 3D platformer bearing many similarities to its Atari VCS roots, as Activision's Indiana Jones-alike swings from vines and jumps across chasms. It's edge-of-the-seat stuff, as giant-sized scorpions scuttle through the darkness and balls of flame threaten Harry's life every step of the way. Action is intensified through the use of roving camera angles. The levels are numerous and varied, from lava-swamped volcano peaks to treacherous underground caverns, plus bonus stages to increase score and energy. To succeed in his quest Harry must fight to save the gorgeous rebel leader, using just his rock pick for protection. It ain't easy, but then a hero's life never is...



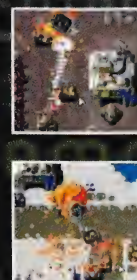
SPAWN: THE ETERNAL SONY

Spawn: The Eternal is a scrolling beat 'em up based on the cult comic book character created by Spider-Man artist Todd McFarlane. The story begins with the conception of Spawn, when national hero Al Simmons is murdered and tricked into selling his soul to some geeza called Malebolgia. One bloody transaction later and the black catsuited hero is out to rid the world of evil. How? By kicking the crap out of anything that comes too close! Elements of adventure and platform action mix with the general thump 'em up theme, while a horde of special moves must be mastered before Spawn gets his vengeance.



Z SONY

One-time video game gurus the Bitmap Brothers step warily onto the PlayStation with this PC conversion. *Z* is a real-time strategy epic that's viewed from above. Players control small armies of battle-scarred robots and must use individual units to gather resources while at the same time attack the enemy encampment with another group of troops. It's fast-paced and hugely enjoyable, not to mention challenging and rewarding. New troops and weapons are introduced as the game progresses, so by the time you've battled through to the umpteenth level your army has more than doubled in size! A two-player link-up option is included to support the standard one-player game, plus *Z* is mouse-compatible making it even easier to play. Smart.



"...EXCELLENT GRAPHICAL CONTENT.
GAMEPLAY IS IMPRESSIVE"

[EDGE JULY '97]

CONQUEST EARTH

"FIRST ENCOUNTER"



AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD STOCKISTS ON PC CD-ROM AND PLAYSTATION



HERCULES
SONY
SONY'S
ARCADE/ADVEN
TURE ADAPTA
TION OF THE
NEW DISNEY
FILM.
PREVIEWED
THIS ISSUE.

NHL
POWERPLAY
'98
VIRGIN
THE SEQUEL TO
VIRGIN'S
RECENTLY
RELEASED ICE
HOCKEY GAME.
NOW WITH
NHL BRAND-
ING.

ROAD RASH
3D
EA
ONE OF EA'S
OLDIE BUT
GOLDIE TITLES
IS TAKEN INTO
THE THIRD
DIMENSION.

CHILL EIDOS

The PlayStation extreme sports bandwagon picks up speed with *Chill*, Eidos' super-fast snowboarding beast. Using a wafer thin strip of fibreglass as a board, competitors are invited to throw themselves down one of five terrifyingly steep mountains. The first to reach the bottom (preferably intact) is the winner. Scrolling is lightning fast and hard-as-nails courses make for tricky gameplay, but the intuitive control system balances the difficulty level nicely. Each slope is blessed with snow drifts and half-pipes, perfect for grabbing some big air. Stunts can earn valuable points, but fast runs are just as useful. A choice of boards is available as well, some suited to speed and others for pulling off tricks. A two-player game is included, in both split-screen and link-up modes, so loneliness on the piste is unlikely.



CYBER BRUCE'S APOCALYPTIC SHOWDOWN WITH THE FOUR HORSEMEN

ACTIVISION

Activision may have suffered from relative anonymity so far on the PlayStation, but the release of *Apocalypse* looks set to change all this. It is the first game to employ

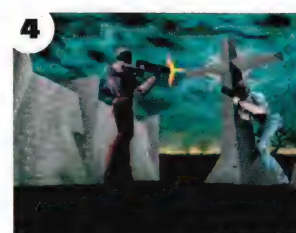
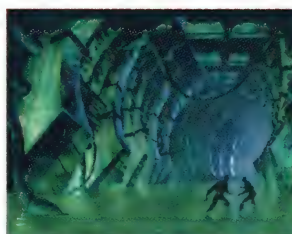
the talents of an A-list Hollywood star, taking one of Tinsel Town's biggest names and giving him the starring role in what might be the most ambitious PlayStation game yet.

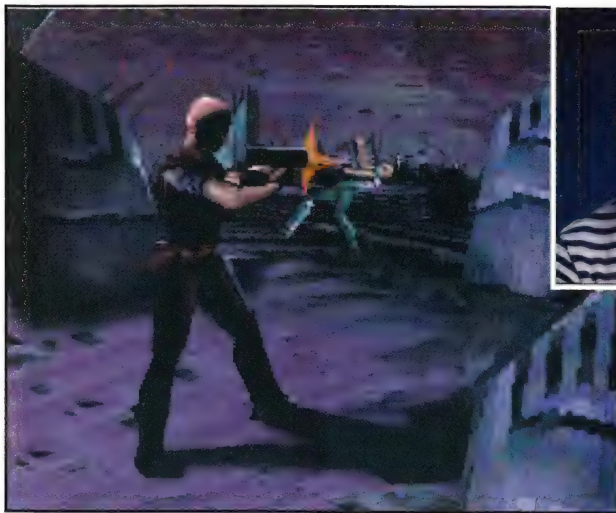
The star in question is Bruce Willis, top action geeza who got the role shortly after filming the sci-fi epic *The Fifth Element*. Willis apparently jumped at the chance saying it was an excellent opportunity to expand his career. The hefty wad of cash probably didn't hurt either.

But here it is, Bruce Willis coming to a PlayStation screen near you.

The game is yet another futuristic shoot 'em up with the future of the earth under threat. A false prophet known only as The Reverend is using nanotechnology to summon the The Four Horseman of the Apocalypse. With Death, Plague, War and The Beast (odd, I thought Famine was the other one) spreading evil across the globe, the end is only a matter of time.

Bruce must stop them. Or at least, with your help. See, even the *Die Hard* tough guy can't handle this on his own. After all, he's only an artificially intelligent battle buddy. Nope, the player must tackle the four bad guys themselves, using Willis to





ARE YOU GONNA BE THE ONE TO TELL HIM THE BEARD LOOKS STUPID? THOUGHT NOT.

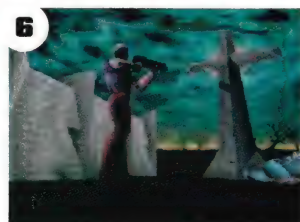
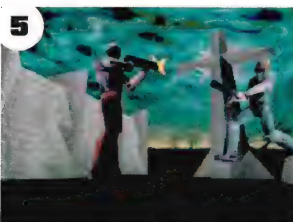
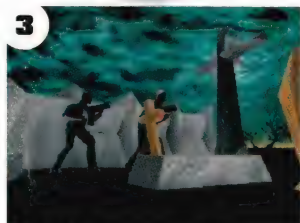
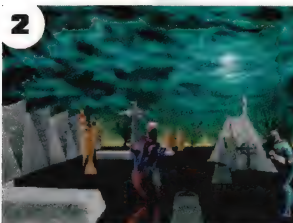
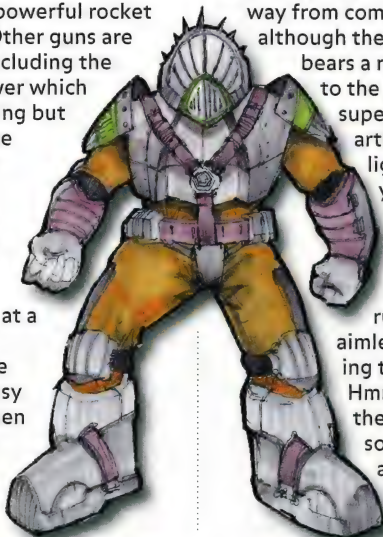
help rather than relying on him to kill the enemy.

The game itself is a 3D blaster which views the action from behind the player. Starting off in the crime-filled city streets, the first objective is to wipe out waves of attacking scum, then find each of the Horsemen in turn. Luckily, there are stacks of weapons available to the player, starting with the weedy laser rifle. The hefty plasma gun is better, but is still no match for the all-powerful rocket launcher. Other guns are available including the flamethrower which is devastating but only at close range, and grenades which are perfect for taking out more than one enemy at a time.

While the player is busy fragging alien ass, Bruce runs around doing his

thang as only Bruce can. He's there to help crap gamers out of sticky situations, stepping into the fray just as the enemy begins to get a bit overpowering. But, if the player has managed to ease through enemy lines without so much as a scratch, Willis will just sit back and watch. Since Activision still wants the game to revolve around the player the dirty-versted one will merely have a supporting role.

Apocalypse is still a long way from completion, and although the character bears a resemblance to the balding superstar the artificial intelligence has yet to be implemented - all he does at the moment is run around aimlessly, shooting things. Hmm, perhaps the Willis personality has already been added after all...



CROC FOX INTERACTIVE
ONE OF THE BEST LOOKING PLATFORMERS FOR THE PLAYSTATION.
PREVIEWED ON PAGE 50.

NIGHTMARE CREATURES SONY
KALISTO'S STUNNING-LOOKING 3D BEAT 'EM UP.
NOW SET FOR A DECEMBER RELEASE.

RAPID RACER SONY
3D BOAT RACING GAME, DEVELOPED BY THE PORSCHE TEAM.
PREVIEWED ON PAGE 58.

MAXIMUM FORCE MIDWAY
ANOTHER DIGITISED SHOOT 'EM UP FROM THE PEOPLE BEHIND AREA 51.

WWF '98 ACCLAIM
ANOTHER OUT-ING FOR ACCLAIM'S LONG-TERM WRESTLING ASSOCIATES.



THE ACCLAIM STAND - OVERFLOWING WITH GAMES BUT SADLY LACKING CUTE TOTTY. BEARDY BLOKES WERE OUT IN FORCE THOUGH.

FIGHTING FORCE EIDOS

Fighting Force may have looked good, but the three chicks promoting the game looked even better. Wearing skimpy PVC outfits, the two blondes and a brunette cavorted around the Eidos stand, enticing men over to watch the game. And it worked. I staggered across, followed by a dozen or so drooling blokes, but found myself gawping at the girls' leather g-strings instead of the game. Oooh...

But the game. *Fighting Force* is a smart-looking 3D beat 'em up in which up to two players can move through the detailed environments picking up weapons and kicking the crap out of any sap wandering within arm's reach.

Obviously the game is bit more complex in practice. For starters there are multiple routes through the game, fighting through different locations and encountering alternative bosses. The scenery changes drastically between locations too, the streets cluttered with parked cars and fire hydrants, while the subway station is crowded with Coke machines and even tramps sleeping rough on benches! The player can interact with background objects, kicking them for bonuses and generally wrecking the joint.

Each of the four characters has a different fighting style. Hawk, a musclebound hardnut with oversized biceps, uses sheer brute force to pummel his opponents, while the sprightly Mace is light on her feet and is an expert in martial arts. Of course weapons are always better than fists, and *Fighting Force* is crammed with baseball bats, batons and shotguns. Heck, there's even a rocket launcher in there if the going gets really tough!





LUCKY LUKE
OCEAN
A COMEDY
COWBOY
ARCADE/ADVE
NTURE USING
CARTOON-
STYLE GRAPH-
ICS. PRE-
VIEWED THIS
ISSUE.

SUIKODEN II
KONAMI
FOLLOW-UP TO
THE BRILLIANT
KONAMI RPG.
AN EVEN
LARGER TASK IS
PROMISED.

BROKEN SWORD 2 SONY

Yank private eye George Stobbart has uncovered another mystery. The wise-cracking blond bloke is again on vacation when whoops, he uncovers a mysterious Mayan prophecy involving global death at the hands of the Lord of Darkness. Cue much puzzle solving and adventure type things, as Georgie boy unravels the game's twisty turny plot. Broken Sword 2: The Smoking Mirror will continue the series tradition by featuring breathtaking graphics, but it's the actually gameplay that makes this sequel rather more interesting. The storyline is non-linear, so there's more than one way for George to solve this monster mystery. Extra marks for added replay value here then.

The Lost World: Jurassic Park

SOMETHING HAS SURVIVED...

ELECTRONIC ARTS

The Lost World: Jurassic Park is perfect videogame fodder. As the movie is crammed with

massive dinosaurs, some chunky weapons and a healthy spattering of blood and gore it's a near-perfect recipe for success. So, assuming all these elements make it into the PlayStation game, this creature is sure-fire winner, right?

Developer Dreamworks Interactive certainly hopes so, and so far does EA which is publishing the game. If American box office

sales are anything to go by, *The Lost World* film is gonna bring in cash by the truckload, and that can only be good for the conversion.

Anyway, the game is scheduled to hit just after the movie. It's a lot like the film in many ways too, in that it's basically a load of really smart visual effects strung together by the flimsy plot. There are chase scenes, bits that makes you jump and a final showdown, but most of all there are dinosaurs. Hundreds off 'em, in fact.

The story goes like this. Something has survived, namely a shitload of dinosaurs which have been quite happily chomping on each other over at site B, the previously

unknown breeding ground for the dinos. Now it's

been discovered by a team of scientists sent to perform tests on the island's indigenous wildlife. But rather than following a few small lizards and running tests on animals, the docs instead stumbled across a couple of T REXs. A lot of blood, loose bowel





movement and severed limbs later and all hell breaks loose, as gun-toting big game hunters are sent to wipe out the Jurassic threat.

The game itself focuses both on the dinosaurs as well as the hunters. It's basically a 3D platformer, a sort of *Pandemonium* with big lizards, with the player initially cast as a tiny *Compsognathus*. As this chicken-like beast the aim is to dart through the undergrowth evading the threat of larger predators. The Raptor, being much larger and stronger, isn't threatened that much by other dinosaurs, although the *Tyrannosaurus Rex* can still cause problems while the hunters fire off a hail of bullets. Lastly it's the turn of the T-Rex, which must dodge or devour the armed soldiers hunting it down.

The player can also opt to be a hunter, using the biggest gun possible to bag dinosaurs and outwit the thick-skinned reptiles. There are also puzzles to work out, but solving problems normally gets relegated to the back-burner when there's a hundred gigantic dinosaurs set on ripping you limb from limb.

Dreamworks Interactive has obviously spent a lot of time



making sure the in-game dinosaurs look as close to their movie counterparts as possible. It works too, because the Jurassic reptiles really do look fantastic. However, at the moment the gameplay isn't quite up to scratch. With a little bit of work though, this could be a real – wait for it – monster.

GRAND THEFT AUTO BMG

Bollocks to being politically correct, *Grand Theft Auto* is one mind-blowing game. It's basically a joyriding sim. Choosing between one of three fully working cities, the player can nick any vehicle they choose, either by breaking into a parked car or hailing one down in the street and dragging the driver out of the window! The point of all this criminal activity is to keep big buddies with the gang bosses that run the gaff, using the stolen vehicles to run errands and so on. Police resistance gets gradually more intense as your criminal record becomes more tarnished, although the heat can be turned down by taking a nicked motor to an illegal mechanics and getting it resprayed. Although *Grand Theft Auto* isn't visually that spectacular, this baby is over-flowing with creamy gameplay...



**OGRE
BATTLE
ATLUS**
ALREADY A
HUGE HIT ON
THE SUPER
NES, THE
POPULAR RPG
SERIES IS
SONY-BOUND.

**MAGE: THE
DARK AGE
MIDWAY**
A 3D BEAT 'EM
UP FEATURING
MEDIEVAL
CHARACTERS
AND DODGE
AND COMBO
MOVES.

**HARDWOOD
HEROES
MIDWAY**
FULLY REN-
DERED BAS-
KETBALL
GAMES, AND
YET ANOTHER
OFFICIAL NBA
LICENCE.



PAC-MAN IN GHOST ZONE FEATURED PROMINENTLY ON THE NAMCO STAND, ALONG WITH *Time Crisis* AND *Air Combat 2*.



THE FIFTH ELEMENT KALISTO

Before you even ask, I loved the film. Bollocks to those who thought the plot was rubbish and 'lacked any sense of reality', *The Fifth Element* is a ball-bursting sci-fi action movie that rocks. Top hardman Bruce Willis takes the limelight, with foxy chick Milla Jovovich and loads of half-naked birds dancing around in the background.

Unfortunately the game has none of the above. There's no Willis, no scantily clad girlies and no horny Milla. It does, however, feature their 'likenesses'. Oh well. Anyway, *The Fifth Element* game follows Korben Dallas (Willis) and Leeloo (Jovovich) as they attempt to save the earth from the Ultimate Evil.

Some 250 years in the future, aliens land on earth. But rather than eliminate humankind and tear the planet to pieces, they offer us ultimate protection in the form of the five elements. Unfortunately just when we need it most of the pieces are missing...

The game kicks in with either Leeloo or Dallas searching for the missing four element stones (anyone who's seen the movie will know where the Fifth Element comes in), using brute force to battle through the alien Mangalores.

Developed by Kalisto, the game essentially uses a spruced-up version of the *Nightmare Creatures* engine. It's therefore a 3D fighting game, set over 15 levels of intense close-combat action. Each stage is influenced from scenes featured in the movie, so locations such as the Astroport and Fhloston Paradise appear regularly in the game. It's only at the end though, that the Fifth Element is revealed and the source of all Evil is thwarted... Cool.



SAN FRANCISCO RUSH MIDWAY
3D RACER SET IN THE MEAN STREETS OF 'FRISCO. LOOKING VERY SIMILAR TO BURNING ROAD.

PACMAN GHOST ZONE NAMCO
RETURN OF THE PAC! AN ALL-NEW ADVENTURE FOR NAMCO'S PENSIONABLE PILL-GOBLER.

CRIME KILLER INTERPLAY
3D RACING GAME SET IN A CRIME-RIDDEN FUTURE. PREVIEWED ON PAGE 68.

PARAPPA THE RAPPER SONY
THE MOST ORIGINAL GAME TO GRACE ANY CONSOLE IN YEARS. NOW SET FOR A PAL RELEASE.

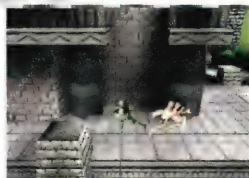
ROLLING STONE PRESENTS: THE TOUR BMG
BIZARRE COLLABORATION BETWEEN BMG AND THE US ROCK MAG. HMMM.

ROSCO MCQUEEN SONY
SONY'S ARCADE/ADVENTURE TAKE ON THE TOWERING INFERNO. PREVIEWED LAST MONTH.



LEGION SONY

One of the many surprises on Sony's stand was a never-before-seen 3D adventure game titled *Legion*. As cybernetic soldier Gabriel the object of the game is to avenge mankind, which is slowly being destroyed by nasty bloke Magda. The 3D environment is haunted by loads of enemy beasts, but Gabriel has more than enough hardware to deal with them. The bosses present much more of a problem, sapping Gabby's ammo and energy supplies and guarding the exit to each of the 15 levels. *Legion* is a one-player game that won't see the light of day until the beginning of next year. Bah.

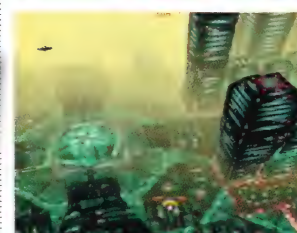


(LEFT) *LEGION* IS A COOL ADVENTURE GAME THAT LOOKS AS ACTION PACKED AS IT IS INVOLVING. AS HERO GABRIEL THE AIM OF THE GAME IS TO HUNT DOWN EVIL GEEZA MADGA USING THE TASTY SELECTION OF WEAPONS.



LUNATIK EIDOS

Lunatik is the first project from Pure Entertainment, and will be released through Eidos Interactive. It's an old skool shoot 'em up, but employs smart 3D graphic routines to give what is essentially a very basic game a really attractive visual hook. Stacks of cool lighting, scaling and rotation effects have been stuffed in the game, along with some monster power-ups that'll turn weedy lasers into awesome genocide blasts. There are eight levels which vary both in visual style and the enemies within, as well as the physical terrain far below the player's ship. The ground is actually 3D, although the fighter hugs the ground leaving the player to concentrate on widescale alien elimination.



FIFA: ROAD TO WORLD CUP '98
CERTAINLY LOOKS BETTER THAN THE LAST GAME, LET'S JUST HOPE THE GAME-PLAY HANGS TOGETHER.

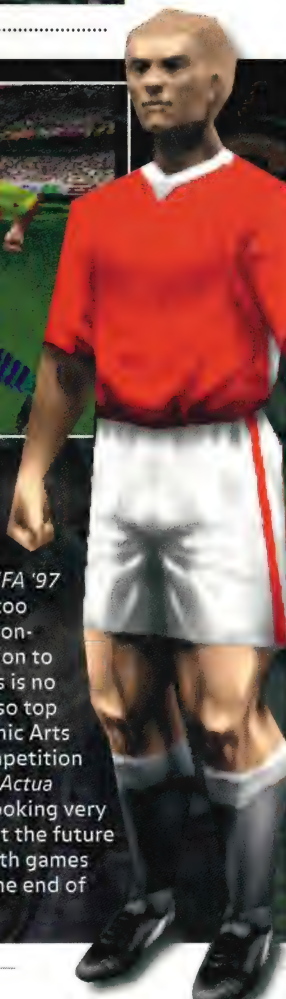


FIFA: ROAD TO WORLD CUP '98

ELECTRONIC ARTS

After the atrocity that was *FIFA '97*, Electronic Arts hopes its next football game will leave a slightly better taste in gamers' mouths. *FIFA: Road to the World Cup '98* boasts a refined 3D engine and once again motion-capture from David Ginola. Gameplay has been improved, though. It's a lot easier to build up flowing plays, with great one-twos and some neat long balls. Reaction time has been res-

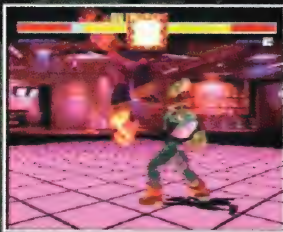
cued as well. One of the criticisms aimed at *FIFA '97* was that it took too long for the motion-captured animation to kick the ball. This is no longer the case, so top marks to Electronic Arts for this one. Competition is fierce though. *Actua Soccer 2* is also looking very nice, so check out the future reviews when both games are released at the end of the year.





VS THQ

THQ's 3D beat 'em up moves very nicely indeed. Motion-captured animation is used liberally, giving a tremendous sense of solidity - the fighters actually look like they're hurting when punched to the ground. The game stars 16 contestants, each with individual fighting styles and special attacks. Blocking moves are innovative with nifty counter-attacks, plus there's the usual array of punches and kicks to throw at an opponent. Gameplay is fast and intense, and is complemented by the pounding alternative rock soundtrack. Whether it has enough variety to supersede *Tekken 2* or *Soul Blade* remains to be seen, but it's already looking nice. Watch out for it in November.



DUKE NUKEM 3D GT INTERACTIVE

PlayStation Plus has been looking forward to this 3D blaster and finally got the chance to check it out at E3. The result? Well, it wasn't really that good. Admittedly it is a very early version, but still the scrolling was jerky and overall the game seemed unbearably slow. However, GT Interactive promises the final code will be much faster. We'll let you know when we see updated code next month. In terms of numbers of levels, monsters and weapons available, PlayStation *Duke* looks pretty close to the PC original. If only the update is sorted out, this blaster could be a corker.



CLAY FIGHTER EXTREME INTERPLAY

Despite development problems *Clay Fighter Extreme* is still coming to PlayStation. The game, which is a sequel to the original 16bit *Clay Fighter*, once again features fighters modelled from plasticine, but this time they're modelled in 3D. *Clay Fighter Extreme* looks unique then, but not just because of the oddball fighters. The backgrounds are pretty amazing too as they offer more than a flat combat arena. Fighters can move up and down as well as left and right, and can even interact with the scenery. If a character is thrown into a building, the fight continues inside! *Clay Fighter Extreme* breaks the... um, mould, then, and Interplay is hoping it will be the game all other beat 'em ups are, er, modelled on. We'll see.

**CLOCK
TOWER
HUMAN**
GRISLY
ARCADE/ADVENTURE,
ALREADY A HUGE HIT IN
JAPAN. NO
RESIDENT
EVIL, THOUGH.

**NINJA
EIDOS**
3D BEAT 'EM
UP DEVELOPED
BY CORE
DESIGN. ONLY
PC SHOTS ON
SHOW AS OF
YET.

**WRECKIN'
CREW
TELSTAR**
DELAYED YET
AGAIN, BUT
TELSTAR'S
BIZARRE RACER
STILL LOOKS
PROMISING.

**MEDIEVIL
SONY**
STUNNING-
LOOKING PLAT-
FORM-CUM-
ARCADE/ADVENTURE.
PREVIEWED
LAST ISSUE.



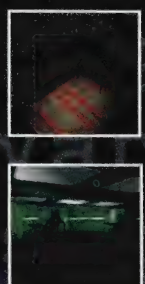
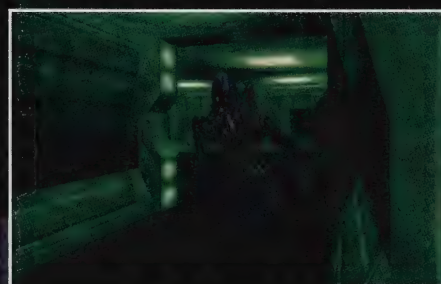
MIDWAY HAD THE PLAYSTATION VERSION OF MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES TO SHOW OFF, WHICH IS SO FAR LOOKING OKAY.

ALIENS VS PREDATOR FOX INTERACTIVE

Fox Interactive's 32bit conversion of the archaic Jaguar game has been a long time coming, but early PlayStation code was on show at E3. Although the scrolling was a little dodgy and a lot of the detailed texture maps have yet to be added, it still offered a flavour of what the final game will be like. It is, quite simply, a bigger, better brother of the Atari Jaguar game of many years ago. So while the concept remains the same, the execution is somewhat different. The levels are no longer flat and featureless, and the gameplay isn't dragged out and devoid of action.

Instead PlayStation gamers get to choose between the Colonial Marine, the Alien and the Predator, tackling the game from each of their perspectives. As the Alien the aim is to simply survive, using razor-sharp claws and teeth to fight off the opposition. The Predator is better equipped, using a wide selection of weapons and the unique infra-red view to track down the enemy. The human marine relies on his weapons, using the smart gun, rocket launcher or one of the other guns to frag the ass off the alien baddies.

Compared to the the original Jaguar game, the PlayStation version looks a whole lot better. The 3D environment is a lot more detailed, and gamers can now look up and down as well as left and right. This not only gives the player a lot more freedom, but also makes *Aliens Vs Predator* much more versatile than *Doom*. In this game enemies attack from above and below, while streams of aliens scuttle along the ceilings and attack from above. It's an intense experience, and one that's not for the faint hearted...



FORMULA ONE '97
PSYGNOSIS
LAST MONTH'S COVER STAR, AND ON SHOW FOR THE FIRST TIME. LOOKING VERY NICE INDEED.

G-POLICE
PSYGNOSIS
3D SHOOT 'EM UP SET IN A BLADE RUNNER-STYLE FUTURE. PREVIEWED ON PAGE 54.

OVERBOARD!
PSYGNOSIS
BIZARRE SHOOT 'EM UP SET ACROSS A SERIES OF WATERY AND HAZARD-LADEN MAZES.

FELONY 11-97
SONY
CRASH-HAPPY RACER ALSO KNOWN AS RUNABOUT, AND PREVIEWED ON PAGE 64.

ACTUAL SOCCER 2
GREMLIN
AN ALL-NEW ENGINE, WITH MORE CONTROL OVER PLAYERS AND MOVES PROMISED.

ALIEN 4
FOX INTERACTIVE
NOTHING TO SEE AS OF YET, BUT THE FILM IS GOING TO BE ABSOLUTELY MASSIVE...

THE X-FILES
FOX INTERACTIVE
NOW OFFICIALLY SCHEDULED FOR A 1998 RELEASE, PRESUMABLY TO TIE IN WITH THE FILM.

NBA LIVE '98

ELECTRONIC ARTS

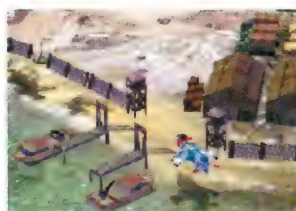
Electronic Arts returns to the basketball courts with its '98 update of the warmly received *NBA Live*. This all-new game is quite obviously better, boasting a refined game engine, pretty cool graphics and all the latest team stats. The options screens are nice too.



NUCLEAR STRIKE

ELECTRONIC ARTS

This topical blast is looking the dog's. Again, it's pretty early in development but so far it looks much better than the previous *Soviet Strike*. The scrolling is super-smooth, there are 12 vehicles to play around with and the ball-breaking action is accompanied by some mind-blowing effects. More news very soon.



FROGGER 3D

HASBRO

It's a weird idea but it definitely works. Take the old arcade classic, which involved guiding the titular reptile across a busy road over to the other side. A bit like the 'chicken' jokes. Stick it in a 3D environment and you have a really playable game. There are loads of levels to tackle and there's going to be a four-player split-screen mode, but best of all the gameplay is simple yet addictive. Cool, and a nice take on the retro theme.



BEAST WARS

HASBRO

Take some mean looking monsters, chuck them in a fighting arena and stand well back. The result is *Beast Wars*, a scrolling shoot 'em up thing based on the latest Transformers toy. Play as either the Maximals or the Predacons in a bid to rule the earth (what else?).



STAR WARS MONOPOLY

HASBRO

If you haven't managed to track down a copy of the board game then settle for the next best thing. *Stars Wars Monopoly* is basically the same as the classic real estate game except it's set in the Star Wars universe. And you get to be Boba Fett, Han Solo or even a Stormtrooper. We like it. We like it a lot.



CULT STATUS

ELECTRONIC ARTS

This outrageous combat racing game from Electronic Arts is accompanied by a Mad Max-style storyline. A champion motor racing driver witnesses the brutal murder of his wife and daughter (see, identical to Mad Max), then takes to the road to seek revenge. Cue loads of crashes, smashes and white-line racing. The crashes look spectacular, and while the 3D techniques may not be quite up to *Rage Racer* standard, they're still fairly funky.



TIME CRISIS

NAMCO

One of the stars of the show, with the supplied gun proving immensely popular. The three new levels were on show for the first time, and it was generally accepted that *Time Crisis* is another string to Namco's bow. Turn to our extensive coverage which begins on page 36.



MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES

MIDWAY

Also signed by GT for a UK release, *Mortal Kombat Mythologies* is a scrolling beat 'em up, developed by MK co-creator John Tobias. Sub-Zero is the central character and wanders across 2D and 3D stages inhabited by over 30 creatures ready to test his frosty fighting skills.



CONSTRUCTOR

ACCLAIM

Developed by System 3, *Constructor* is an unruly alternative to *Sim City 2000*. Cast as a town planner, it invites players to create the city of their dreams and fill it with wealthy inhabitants. However, as the CPU does the same, the player can resort to dirty tricks such as lobbing in valuers to frighten off potential citizens and send property prices plummeting. Gazumping is also in there somewhere. It's a first, humour works in a game.



SUPER STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION

CAPCOM

Super Street Fighter and the two coin-op spin-offs are set to make their PlayStation debut. Fans of the series will love it, and it will be the first chance PlayStation owners have had to get to grips with Cammy and Dee-Jay.



JUDGE DREDD

GREMLIN

Gremlin has snapped up the licence to the most famous lawman in the world. *Judge Dredd* is a *Virtua Cop/Time Crisis* clone, with the player blowing away perps on the streets of Mega City One. All the expected Dredd favourites are present, including Dredd's awesome Lawgiver gun and its six ammo possibilities.



X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM

ACCLAIM

The surprise appearance of the show. Following both Capcom and Acclaim announcing the proposed PlayStation version of *X-men: COTA* had been scrapped, a virtually complete version was on show. Apparently, the code has been farmed out externally, and Acclaim is hoping for an autumn release — although, obviously, they're still not putting money on it.



Frank Miller and Geof Darrow's

HARD Boiled



Intense high-speed shooting action with a techno soundtrack.



Distributed by

ELECTRONIC ARTS



MAGIC: THE GATHERING 2
ACCLAIM
SECOND
PLAYSTATION
GAME BASED
ON THE POPU-
LAR PLAYING
CARD GAME.

MIDNIGHT
RUN
KONAMI
CONVERSION
OF KONAMI'S
CAR RACING
COIN-OP.
ONLY AN
EARLY DEMO
ON SHOW.

JIMMY
JOHNSON'S
VR
FOOTBALL
'98

INTERPLAY
MORE VR
SPORTS, AS
INTERPLAY
APPLY
MOTION-CAP-
TURE TO
AMERICAN
FOOTBALL.

TREASURES
OF THE DEEP
NAMCO
LOADS OF
WEAPONS AND
CARNAGE POS-
SIBILITIES
AWAIT IN THIS
UNDERSEA
ADVENTURE.

POINT
BLANK
NAMCO
COMPATIBLE
WITH THE NEW
NAMCO GUN,
AND AN ALTER-
NATIVE TO
TIME CRISIS.

KLONOA
NAMCO
A MAGICAL
QUEST SET
WITHIN A
GAUDY 3D
WORLD. NOT
ACTUALLY ON
SHOW.

SUPERMAN
TITUS
BASED ON THE
CARTOONS,
THE MAN OF
STEEL FLIES
THROUGH THE
SKIES OF A 3D
METROPOLIS.

FANTASTIC FOUR

ACCLAIM

Previewed last issue, *Fantastic Four* was the first public unveiling of Probe's four-player beat 'em up. Probe has listened to comments made by PlayStation Plus during the game's development, and the game now boasts more fighting variety and more interaction with backdrop monsters than before. See, it's good to talk.



NHL BREAKAWAY '98

ACCLAIM

Mentioned in the news pages last issue, *NHL Breakaway '98* is a fast and furious hockey game. The motion-captured players can be viewed from any angle, and the NHL licence means that the current 26 teams have been used. The AI was also impressive, with the opposition behaving intelligently to intercept passes, etc.



MAGIC: THE GATHERING. BATTLEMAGE

ACCLAIM

The first PlayStation title based on the popular RPG-based card game. Acclaim has used the scenarios the card games offer as inspiration for a real-time strategy game, with the player taking on wizards and demons as they explore the fully rendered plains of Corondor.



SPIRAL SAGA

SONY

A mixture of RPG and arcade/adventure elements, with the player guiding a knight across a series of isometric screens. The main sprites and backdrops are all fully light-sourced, and while *Spiral Saga* is never likely to be a contender for the mighty *Final Fantasy VII*'s crown, it seems to be a worthy supplement.



RAMPAGE WORLD TOUR

MIDWAY

A sequel to Midway's ten-year-old *Rampage* coin-op, with the stars - a huge werewolf, Godzilla clone and wannabe King Kong - touring the world and demolishing key landmarks on their travels. The local authorities send tanks and soldiers to stop them, but the ant-like humans also act as monster food to replenish energy lost in their attacks!



NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB '98

ACCLAIM

The latest in Acclaim's long line of NFL licences, includes plays designed by Super Bowl hero Brett Favre (who he?). 30 NFL teams, and a 3D graphics system which allows Acclaim to throw in their customary motion-capture techniques and offer a close up view of the plays and passes.



NBA IN THE ZONE '98

KONAMI

The third game in Konami's ongoing series expands upon the last two games, with five-on-five action which includes new techniques such as behind-the-back dribbling, fake shots, and pivoting. The option to play a season has been enhanced, too, with the ability to trade players to build up your NBA side. Sounds promising...



NBA JAM '98

ACCLAIM

Gone are the 2D sprites associated with the arcade series, with Acclaim taking the 3D engine used in *NBA Jam Extreme*. Five-on-five play has been coupled with all the bizarre moves and secret tactics the basketball series is famed for. As with virtually every other NBA-endorsed game, all the latest team stats have been used.



EARTHWORM JIM 3D

INTERPLAY

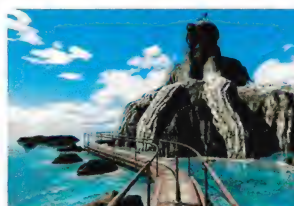
Viz's 3D interpretation of the Shiny Entertainment 16bit classic was looking quite interesting. The new perspective as Jim runs in and out of the screen while avoiding meanies takes a little getting used to at first, but all the humour and zaniness expected of an *Earthworm Jim* game was present, as were the power-ups seen in the first two games.



RIVEN

ACCLAIM

The best-selling video game of all time is *Myst*, and Acclaim has snapped up the sequel. *Riven* uses the same control technique and hi-res graphics of the first game, but boasts a larger play area, and more character interaction, as the hero Atrus searches for his beloved Catherine. Acclaim is confident the sequel will more than live up to the original.



INTELLIGENT QUBE

SONY

A simplistic puzzle game in which the player guides a tiny man-sprite out of the path of a series of rolling blocks. The basic idea is to clear the screen of these blocks, with the player laying special tiles to destroy them which, in conjunction with other tiles, set off complex chain reactions. Perhaps one for the more cerebrally inclined, this.



MEGAMAN NEO

CAPCOM

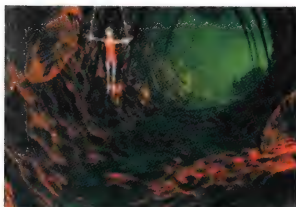
At last, Capcom has got the hint and tried something new with *MegaMan*! *MegaMan Neo* is a 3D platformer, with the blue-armoured hero exploring a polygonal play area, and blowing away the aliens trying to take it over. During the course of the game, *MegaMan* rides on cars and adds new weapons to his suit. *MegaMan* has never looked so cool.



HELL

TAKE 2

GameTek released a PC version of this fully rendered adventure last year, but it disappeared without a trace. Billed as a 'cyberpunk thriller', *Hell* is set in the year 2095. The government controls the gates of Hell, and the player is cast as a man wrongly imprisoned there. Your mission? Get the - ahem - 'hell' out of there.



POPULOUS: THE THIRD COMING

EA

Bullfrog effectively created the 'God Sim' with *Populopus* for the Atari ST and Amiga. They are now set to update the basic idea for the PlayStation. *Populous: The Third Coming* pits the player against rival Gods, as the deities attempt to establish themselves as the dominant force of the game.



MADDEN NFL '98

EA

The longest of EA's sporting associates returns for the umpteenth time. All the stats have been updated for the new season, and the game engine has also been improved. For example, if a player is about to make a play, it is possible to look either side of the player before the throw is made. Could be the ultimate Madden game yet.



HERC'S ADVENTURES

LUCASARTS

A long time in the making, *Herc's Adventures* is virtually complete. A comedy arcade/adventure, *Herc's Adventures* takes the form of a cartoon-style epic, with the player guiding one of three mortals into Hades where a beautiful Goddess and a teetering pile of treasure await the valiant.



X-MEN VS STREET FIGHTER

CAPCOM

Another Capcom title said to be Saturn only, *X-Men Vs Street Fighter* is now officially PlayStation-bound. Pitting the cream of the X-Men beat 'em up against Capcom's World Warriors, the game adds new moves to both sets of characters, with the *Street Fighter* heroes now armed with all-new combo attacks.



DARKSTALKERS 3

CAPCOM

The latest in Capcom's *Night Warriors* series, with more characters and moves. Capcom constantly cross-pollinate ideas between their fighting games, and *Darkstalkers 3* is set to use combo and special moves systems refined in earlier *X-Men* and *Street Fighter* games. As with most Capcom games, development is leading on Saturn code. Boo.



ONE ASC

ATTRACTIVE SHOOT 'EM UP, PLAYED THROUGH A NUMBER OF FREE SCROLLING STAGES.

CAROM SHOT ASCII

A POOL SIMULATION OFFERING SEVEN LOCATIONS TO TRY YOUR TRICK SHOTS.

MASTER OF MONSTERS ASCII

A 16BIT RPG TITLE REVAMPED WITH AN ISO-METRIC VIEW FOR ITS PLAYSTATION RELEASE.

SHADOW MADNESS ASCII

FULLY RENDERED RPG, WITH THE PLAYER BUILDING AN ARMY TO DEFEAT THE EVIL DRAG.

MOON ASCII

ANOTHER ASCII RPG, WITH CARTOON GRAPHICS ECPLOING JAUNTY LOCATIONS.

AQUA PROPHECY ASCII

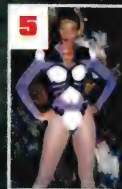
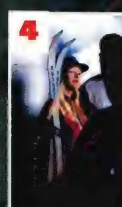
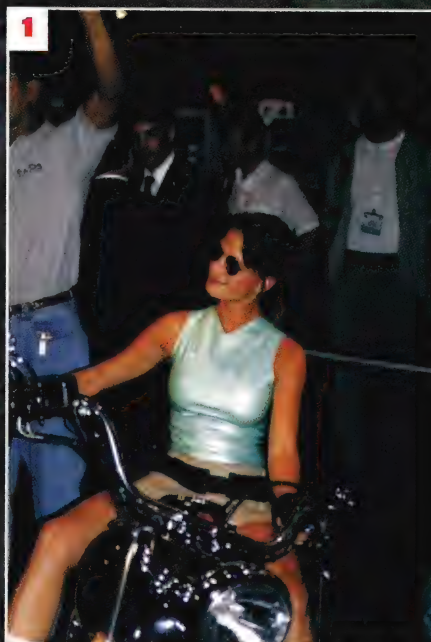
LOOKING LIKE TOMB RAIDER'S UNDERWATER SECTION, BUT WITH A FLIPPER-WEARING HEROINE.

NASCAR '98 EA

THE LATEST HOME VERSION OF THE US RACING CIRCUIT HAS BEEN PICKED UP BY EA.

TOP FIVE BABES

1. **LARA CROFT**
SHE'S WHAT THE WORD GOYJUSH WAS INVENTED FOR. SPURT.
2. **FIGHTING FORCE CHICKS**
ANYONE FOR A THREE-PLAYER GAME?
3. **HOT PLAYBOY PLAYMATE**
CUTE BLONDE IN TINY LEATHER BASQUE. CREAMY.
4. **KONAMI'S WINTER OLYMPIC BIRD**
AMERICAN VERSION OF SPORXY SPICE.
5. **ACTIVISION'S OLD DOG**
AMERICAN VERSION OF PAULINE FOWLER.



BUGGY

GREMLIN

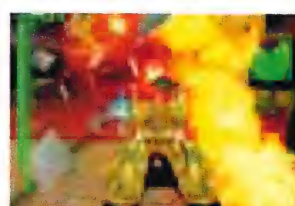
A racing game, with the player guiding a large-wheeled buggy over a series of rough 'n' tumble courses. 16 tracks await the player's attentions, with a split-screen mode offering simultaneous two-player competition. A number of different buggy styles are also on offer. The game is a natural follow-on from *Hardcore 4x4*, with even more rough and tumbling.



ARMoured CORE

SONY

Anyone who loves the huge robo-units featuring in so many Manga videos will love this. *Armoured Core* puts the player in control of one such suit, and drops them in a series of battles. 48 battle scenarios are on offer, and as the player progresses through them, a wealth of new weapons can be added to the suit. Already looking quite promising.



MONKEY HERO BMG

MANGA-STYLE GRAPHICS COMPLEMENT THIS INTERESTING ARCADE/ADVENTURE.

THE DARK HALF: ENDSVILLE THQ

BIZARRELY, THIS IS BASED ON THE STEPHEN KING BOOK ABOUT A WRITER'S EVIL ALTER EGO.

DEAD UNITY THQ

WORKS IS AN ENHANCED ROBOT, AND THQ INVITES YOU TO EXPLORE A 3D WORLD WITH HIM.

SPEED TRIBES THQ

A FUTURISTIC RACE GAME WHERE FLYING CYCLES ARE THE FASTEST MEANS OF TRANSPORT.

**PERSONA
ATLUS**
A TURN-BASED RPG BASED ON THE POPULAR JAPANESE MEGAMI TESEI SERIES.

TANKTICS

BMG

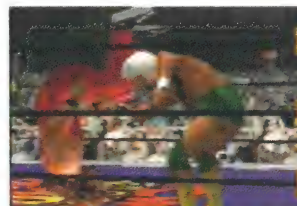
Coded by DMA Design, *Tanktics* is a tank game set in a number of time zones. Featuring stone age tanks, mediaeval versions and futuristic varieties, the player is given a basic vehicle and charged with winning the battle presented in each time zone, as well as building up their vehicle with the spoils awarded to the victor.



WCW NITRO

THQ

Following the success of *WCW Vs The World*, THQ's association with the wrestling brigade prompts a sequel. Set for a November 1997 release, the sequel promises a 3D ring, texture-mapped wrestlers based on the top stars (Hulk Hogan, Ric Flair, etc), and easier to effect moves than in past wrestling games.



MASS DESTRUCTION

ASC

Tank games seem to be in vogue, so ASC don caterpillars and set off into battle. *Mass Destruction* is a 24-stage 3D shoot 'em up. Set across four environments (including snow and desert stages), *Mass Destruction* lives up to its name, offering the player the chance to wantonly blow away absolutely everything in their path. Huge explosions, are the order of the day.



COLLIDERZ

ASC

Confronting Lucasarts' *BallBlazer Champions* head on, *Colliderz* is another take on the futuresport genre. Set within 3D arenas, the game is a mix of footie and ice hockey, with the player using both skill and foul play to steer a puck into the opponent's goal. It includes the first ever video game pitch invasion, apparently...



HARDCORE 2

ASC

More trucks, more tracks, and more weather conditions than ever before! Six trucks, eight tracks including the Vega desert, Swampland, and the Grand Canyon, and ASC have also included night and daytime effects which, combined with wind, snow and torrential rain threaten to topple even the hardest of trucks.



JOE BLOW

TELSTAR

Ready to take on *Rascal* from Psygnosis is *Joe Blow*. Created by Telstar, Joe is a little monkey trapped within a huge 3D dreamworld. The plot tells how the world is being plagued by nightmares, and Joe - armed only with bubble gum and a spray can - has been sent into the dream world to end the bad dreams. Motion-capture has been used throughout for extra realism.



TOP FIVE LIFE-SIZE CHARACTERS

1. PARAPPA THE RAPPER

HE'S STILL THE MAN WITH THE MASTER PLAN.

2. ZOMBIE COP

UNDEAD RESIDENT EVIL BLOKE WITH NICOLE KIDMAN IN TOW.

3. AERO THE ACROBAT

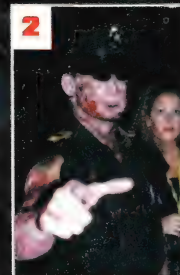
PROOF THAT THIS NAFF GAME HERO STILL LIVES.

4. PINGU

OKAY, SO IT AIN'T PINGU, BUT WHAT THE HELL IS IT?

5. BRUCE WILLIS

BLIMEY, IT REALLY IS BRUCE WILLIS!



(LEFT) BALD BLOKE BRUCE WILLIS IS STALKED BY THE BALL AND CHAIN WHILE HE MEETS HIS MINIONS.

SPECIAL OPS

BMG

Special Ops: US Army Rangers is a ground combat simulation, with the player guiding a crack troop into a number of hazardous missions. These include the rescue of hostages, destroying weapons, and assassinations - all played over rough terrain and against a computer opponent with incredible AI. BMG are aiming the game at shoot 'em up fans who fancy something meatier.



"Makes Sega Rally look like an old age pensioner"
GamesMaster

**"PlayStation owners everywhere will be rejoicing
with this game"**

Official PlayStation Magazine

"Fastest thing on the PlayStation"
Edge

Official PlayStation Magazine 9/10
PlayStation Plus 95%



- Official cars from 1997 WRC season
- Multi-player mode
- Varied weather and terrain driving conditions
- Real time 3D imaging and Dolby™ Surround Sound™
- 42 Tracks - the largest number ever
- Totally realistic rally road handling
- Real engine sound and radio communication with professional co-drivers

V-RALLY
97 CHAMPIONSHIP EDITION
Heart Racing Action



PRINCE'S TRUST SIGNS UP WITH SONY PLAYSTATION • NEW JOYPAD LINE-UP FROM ASC • IKINO OFFER SLICK CD-ROM STORAGE • GAMES CHAMPIONSHIP HEATS UP

A SLIGHTLY TRUNCATED NEWS SECTION THIS MONTH, ON ACCOUNT OF OUR EXTENSIVE E3 REPORT FROM ATLANTA. THE SHOW DIDN'T REALLY THROW UP THAT MANY SURPRISES: SEGA'S LOW-KEY PRESENCE, AND ONLY HALF THE N64 GAMES PROMISED. THE QUALITY OF PLAYSTATION GAMES WAS BETTER THAN LAST YEAR, THOUGH. THE GAME OF THE SHOW FOR ME? KONAMI'S METAL GEAR SOLID. WATCH THIS SPACE, IT IS GOING TO BE MASSIVE...
STEVE MERRETT, EDITOR

PlayStation Teams up with Prince's Trust

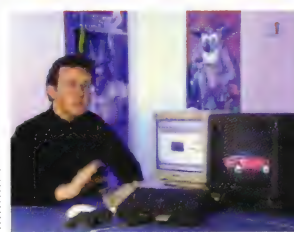


Sony has joined forces with the Prince's Trust to create *Power Source*, the first ever video game to be published by the charity. The CD is the first charity CD since 1984's Soft Aid compilations for the Live Aid appeals. Proceeds from the CD will go to create more outdoor activities for the scheme pioneered by Prince Charles. A secondary aim of the CD is to attract young talent to the

Sony machine.

The CD is on sale now, priced £9.99, and contains playable demos of *Tomb Raider*, *Porsche Challenge*, *Monster Trucks*, *Exhumed* plus many more. There is also a digitised feature on the Net Yaroze, Sony's subscriber-driven do-it-yourself programming system, along with *Blown Away*, a short video containing clips of forthcoming PlayStation games. Check it out at a store near you, not only will you be helping a good cause but you'll be getting stacks of rather impressive demos, too.

PlayStation and gain the interest of up and coming talent in the



Millennium Games Championship

Computer Games Promotions is holding a PlayStation tournament at the beginning of November to find the gamer of the Millennium. The event will be held on Sunday 2nd November at the Waterfront Leisure Centre, Woolwich. Entrance fee is £15 and competitors will play *Rage Racer*, *Tekken 2* and *Formula 1*, before progressing to the finals. Six champions will each receive a trophy plus a cheque for £175, and will be invited to enter the grand final, scheduled and televised on Cable TV show Games World. Entrants must be over 13 though, and tickets must be pre-ordered. Call the CGP Hotline on 0181 313 0717.

CANNED! ROCKET JOCKEY



HOVER BIKE COMBAT GAME
Rocket Jockey has bitten the dust even though it was almost complete on the PC with a PlayStation version following behind. The reason? Its developers have ceased trading and nobody else wanted to buy up this turkey. That's that, then.

Out Now

On the shelves this month...

V-RALLY

Excellent off-road racer from Infogrames and Ocean. Car dynamics are great and gameplay is spot-on, but the sheer number of tracks makes this a blinder. Worth buying? Judge by our score: It reaped a massive 94% this issue.



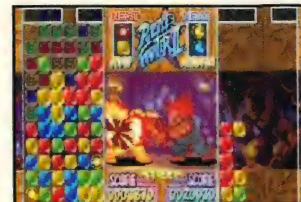
SYNDICATE WARS

Another game that's been in development for months finally reaches the shelves this month. Notching up a score of 92% last issue, *Syndicate Wars* is an absorbing mix of strategy and action. Go buy.



SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER

Okay, so it's been a long time coming but this addictive puzzle game has been well worth the wait. Extremely easy to pick up but much harder to master, this budget masterpiece scored 92% in Issue 19.



Ikino Storage

PlayStation games no longer have to live on the floor if you've invested in an Ikino storage system. Ideal for keeping games out of harm's way, Ikino has produced a storage box specifically for

CD-ROMs. The 240 model (larger boxes are available) costs £14.99, is available in a variety of colours and holds just under a dozen boxes. To tidy up your game area give Ikino a call on 01656 669906.



ASCII's Joypad Invasion

American softco ASCII is continuing its joypad bombardment. After launching its Sony-endorsed range when the PlayStation was first released, ASCII's second coming is spearheaded with the release of four new peripherals. First up is the Sphere 360, an ergonomically designed analogue pad offering incredible control. Slender in design, the Sphere 360° has a rounded Dpad rather than cross-shaped giving players complete control.

The ASCII Grip is a one-handed controller fitting into the player's palm. The Dpad can be operated with either

thumb (the Grip is designed for use by both left and right-handed people) while the fore and index fingers can press the buttons. It's fully programmable too and can therefore be adapted to suit any game whatsoever.

The arcade stick is essentially a variation of ASCII Specialised Stick. It boasts the same chunky buttons which are micro-switched, but the actual has been stick refined. It's now a bat rather than a oversized ball, so should cut down on those aching hands.

Lastly there's the Mach 1 flight controller and pedal

set-up. This pair is obviously designed for flight sims, and offers both analogue and digital control. The wheel can also be used for driving games, using the different button set-ups to optimise player control.

No price or release date has been confirmed for any of the above as yet, but they are expected to appear this Autumn.



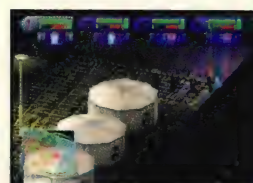
ASCII's SLICK SPHERE 360° MAY LOOK LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF STAR TREK BUT IT'S REALLY NICE TO USE.

RECOMMENDED



V-RALLY

Ocean's off-road racer recreates all the bumps of rally driving along treacherous dirt tracks. This beast is over-flowing with tracks and cars but it's the alternative nature of the gameplay that recommends it. Great fun.



SYNDICATE WARS

Bullfrog's Blade Runner-style epic combines complex strategy and intense action within a superbly detailed 3D cityscape. Control a team of four agents and use them to take over the world. Best played with a mouse.



SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER

This hyper-addictive puzzler proves the Capcom isn't just a dab hand at beat 'em ups. Starring familiar faces from *Street Fighter* and *Dark Stalkers*, this really is gripping stuff.



RAGE RACER

Namco once again redefines the racing genre with the third in the *Ridge Racer* series. boasting loads of cars, courses and options, this is without a doubt the fastest, most visually impressive driving game on the PlayStation.

BUBBLE BOBBLE 2

Virgin's sequel to the classic cutesy platformer is crammed with levels and all-new power-ups. Trouble is, it's just not that much fun. *Bubble Bobble 2* was rated a meagre 74% in this issue, even though it's only £35.



WARCRAFT 2

Fantasy strategy game in the style of *Command and Conquer*. Control either an army of orcs or humans, create the biggest war machine possible then wipe out the enemy. Reviewed this issue, *Warcraft 2* scored 88%.



RAY TRACERS

Taito's super-fast *Chase HQ* clone may look fantastic but sadly it lacks lasting appeal. Enjoy the speed while you can because this baby climaxes all too quickly. *Ray Tracers* scored 73% in this issue.



AND THE PROPHECY SHALL BE
FIRST HORSEMAN SHALL
HE IS DEATH, AND HELL. ALL
THE SECOND HORSEMAN SHALL
RELEASED TO RAISE THE HUMANS FROM THE
A PLAGUE ACROSS THE LAND.



An original PlayStation™ game starring Bruce Willis as your virtual partner.

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ACTIVISION™

T

h o u s h a l t k i l l

SHALL RIDE AS THE THIRD HORSEMAN
TO TAKE PEACE FROM THE EARTH,
BROTHER AGAINST BROTHER.
THE FOURTH AND FINAL HORSEMAN,
SHALL GO FORTH CONQUERING AND
TO CONQUER...UNTIL THE END OF THE

APOCALYPSE™

The end begins this Autumn.



Time Crisis

Blam! One man.
Blam! One gun.
There's five in
the clip, another
in the chamber
and an army of
hoods to wipe
out. Someone's
gonna get hurt...

at long last the wait is over. Namco's stunning *Time Crisis* finally comes crashing onto the PlayStation. In arcade form this coin sucker is arguably one of the finest, most refined gun games ever invented. Tension becomes unbearable as every step of the way feels like a real and bloody fight against all odds. So how does this conversion stand up to such a killer original? Find out in our blow-by-blow eight-page special.

ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE

It's the game they said could never be converted. No matter how powerful Sony's PlayStation was considered to be, the machine simply could not cope with the speed and graphics offered by a Namco Super System 22 arcade board. Well, thankfully they were wrong. *Time Crisis* has been released in Japan and it's devastating. If ever there was a reason to cry for joy at owning a grey box of tricks, or a case for busting balls to get hold of one, this has got to be it. Prepare to be amazed.

Gun games have gone through many stages of evolution. From the humble beginnings of *Hogan's Alley* and *Duck Hunt*, where weapons were decidedly uncomfortable and gameplay laughably simplistic, the genre has passed through *Operation Wolf* and *Lethal Enforcers* eventually leading to *Virtua Cop*. Sega's land-



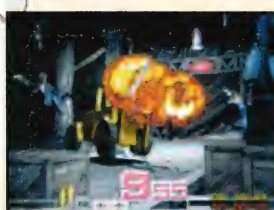
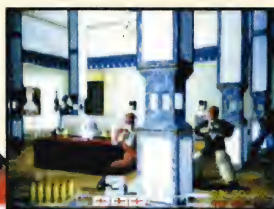
(FROM TOP)
RACHEL
MACPHERSON
- HOSTAGE;
WILD DOG -
VILLAIN;
RICHARD
MILLER -
HERO;
SHERUDO
GARO -
PONCE.



Release : NOVEMBER
Company : NAMCO
Price : TBA
Players : 1
Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP

OWN YOUR OWN

The arcade *Time Crisis* uses Namco's Super 22 System, the same board used by *Tokyo Tank Wars*, *Dirt Dash* and most importantly *Tekken 3*. Available in two versions, with a 27" or 50" screen, the gun uses simulated recoil – which is actually rather annoying when trying for complete accuracy. With an almost perfect conversion soon to be available for the PlayStation, although lacking a high res mode, you will be able to purchase your own *Time Crisis* for about £7,930 less than the arcade machine.



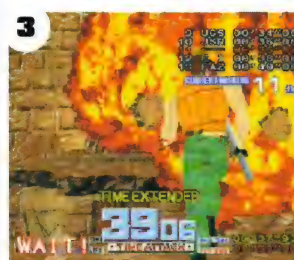
mark product undoubtedly set new standards, especially in terms of graphics, and its style was ruthlessly copied by a bunch of cheap imitations. Then came *Time Crisis*, which looked familiar but played like a lungful of fresh air. Several simple new ideas meant Japanese game giants Namco had totally reinvented the genre.

GUN PROBLEM

What was instantly striking about the arcade *Time Crisis* was a strange foot pedal – similar to those found on bins – attached to the base of cabinets. Slamming this device was much more than

just a gimmick and served several purposes. Reloading, for a start. But, more importantly, in the middle of desperate shootouts pedalling allowed players to dive behind crates, walls and other handily placed protective objects. Enemies could often be spotted through narrow gaps in items allowing you to wait for bullets to stop ricocheting and jump out already sighted on target.

This simple idea made a staggering difference to gameplay. Face it, unless your skin's synthetic or you have a serious death wish, swaggering into gun battles



with only a smile to hide behind is a daft idea. Namco cleverly gave players the chance to re-live all those James Bond playground games, only this time it all felt much more real.

Namco has avoided the need for a foot pedal to be packaged with the PlayStation version by adding buttons beneath the muzzle of its marvellous gun. This option may be the simplest to work out, but it's not as comfortable or fun. A couple of hours into play shoulders really start aching because of the unnatural stance that you need to play it. Fear not, however, for it's possible to plug in a standard pad, drop it on the floor and

pretend you're in a seedy arcade. Sounds daft and a little anorak but actually this method of play works exceptionally well.

Another of the arcade game's innovations – and one that's been converted to the PlayStation – was turning battles into fights against the clock as well as against a more solid enemy. Because of traditions set by previous gun games, when players were first confronted by *Time Crisis* avoiding shots naturally seemed to be the key to success. But with experience came a realisation that enemies needed to be removed as quickly as possible. This meant cover could not be over-used and patterns of



ONCE AGAIN THE NAMCO BOFFINS SHOW OFF THEIR TECHNICAL EXPERIENCE. TIME CRISIS OPENS WITH A FANTASTIC FILM-STYLE INTRODUCTION TO CHARACTERS AND PLOT.





attack had to be worked out. Soldiers and henchmen, weapons and time bonuses further extended the need to pick out targets carefully and very, very quickly.

YOUR MISSION...

Time Crisis arcade offered two modes of play which have both been ported to the PlayStation. One is a time trial offering the chance to test skills on any of the three levels. Health supplies are limitless but when the clock reaches zero it's game over time. Alternatively, a story mode goes through each

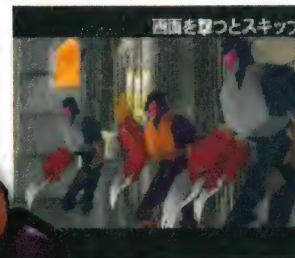
level in order, following a basic plot and tying everything up with a satisfying conclusion.

Us PlayStation owners, lucky devils that we are, not only get a totally faithful conversion of the original – from cut sequences down to the correct number of bad guys jumping out on each screen – but much more besides. Namco has decided to give true value for money by throwing in a whole new game which (unbelievable as it sounds) actually looks and plays better than the original conversion.

ALTHOUGH NOT AS GRAPHICALLY POLISHED AS THE ORIGINAL, TIME CRISIS SEEMS IDENTICAL IN EVERY OTHER RESPECT, INCLUDING ALL CUT SEQUENCES.



Continued on page 43. ►►

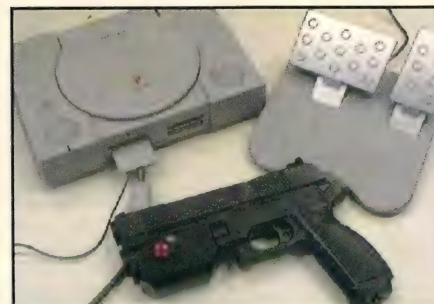


GUNCON REVIEWED

Lacking recoil ability, Namco's GunCon which comes packaged with *Time Crisis* is nevertheless sex itself. To improve accuracy the device plugs into both a pad port and the video-out jack point at the back. Apparently this allows each screen to be held in the memory giving accuracy to one pixel. To you and I that means you could hit the pimples off Posh Spice at 100 yards. Calibrating is quick and simple and involves firing at the centre of a target and checking the dot that remains on screen. Recalibration is advisable at regular intervals because the gun is so accurate if you happen to change positions the sighting goes out.

To begin with the unit feels a bit light and insubstantial, but then if it were more solid holding it for hours would be exhausting. A muzzle button takes care of ducking, but an extra pad can also be plugged in to stamp on. PlayStation Plus discovered it's also possible to plug in a steering wheel and use the brake or accelerate pedals. Viola! The real deal in your own front room. In black the GunCon looks perfect but in Europe the device will be grey. This is down to the Germans who think there's a real danger youngsters will try and use them to rob banks. Should have thought that a lead trailing out of the base of the weapon would give things away, but that's the Germans for you...

(BELOW) GO THE WHOLE HOG. PLUG A STEERING WHEEL SYSTEM INTO CONTROL PORT TWO AND USE BREAK/ACCELERATE PEDALS TO DUCK.



RATINGS

ACCURACY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★
LOOKS	★★★★★
RESPONSE	★★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★★

PLAYSTATION-ONLY LEVELS

Conversions don't get any better than the job Namco has done on *Time Crisis*, but the Japanese arcade wizards decided programming the port just wasn't enough. No, instead they've added a whole new level just for the PlayStation. In it, Richard

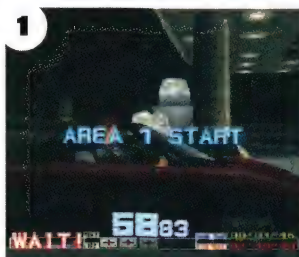
Miller returns for a totally new mission that aims to break Kantaris, Wild Dog's weapons supplier. The organisation, run by a mysterious woman, has its headquarters in a massive hotel.

The PlayStation-only level boasts completely different

enemies, vehicles, bosses and a story with multiple routes. There are a total of eight areas, which again are broken down into sections and progression through a route depends on sharp shooting abilities. If sections are completed early, or cer-

tain items shot up then play can move on to a more difficult area.

The following shots, which show just one route through the PlayStation levels, should give you a taste of what's to come. So chow down with us...



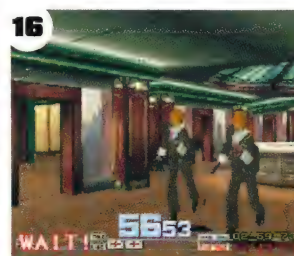
PULLING UP TO THE ENTRANCE OF KANTARIS HQ IN A SPORTY MOTAH RICHARD MILLER IS JUMPED BY PARKING ATTENDANTS AND BELL BOYS. IT'S THE BEGINNING OF THE GAME SO NATURALLY THERE'S NOT TOO MUCH TO WORRY ABOUT HERE.



AFTER MOVING THROUGH TWO OUTSIDE AREAS, IT'S TIME TO CHECK IN AT THE FOYER. YOUR SITUATION STARTS TO HOT-UP QUICKLY AS SEVERAL SHARPSHOOTERS POP UP. A BETTER VIEW IS AFFORDED BY HITTING THE SUPPORT THAT HOLDS UP THE PIANO TOP.



TURNING ON YOUR HEELS ANOTHER SHEDLOAD OF HOODS TRY AND CAP YOUR BUTT. SOMEHOW A GROUP OF THUGS WEARING BALACLAVAS MANAGE TO GET A CAR INTO THE BUILDING AND PROMPTLY RUN DOWN SOME OF THEIR OWN MEN.



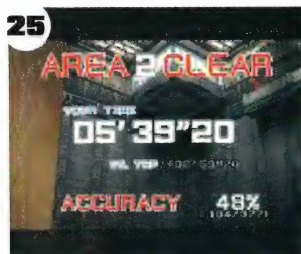
INTO THE LIFT AREA AND ENEMIES START HIDING BEHIND FURNITURE AND FAUNA. IF YOU MANAGE TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION QUICKLY A NEW ROUTE OPENS UP VIA ONE OF THE ELEVATORS. IF NOT TAKE A WALK UP THE STAIRS TO AREA TWO.



BELLHOPS, MANAGERS AND MARKSMEN ARE JOINED BY RAMBOS WITH CHAINGUNS. THIS IS THE HOTEL SHOPPING AREA, WHICH CONTAINS PLENTY OF DISPLAY CABINETS JUST CRYING OUT TO BE SHOT UP.



DOWN ONE OF THE TIGHT CORRIDORS LEADING AWAY FROM SHOPS SHIELDED THUGS SHUFFLE INTO VIEW. TIME TO MAKE A SWIFT EXIT DOWN A WASTE DISPOSAL CHUTE, RIGHT IN AMONGST A BUNCH OF NINJAS.



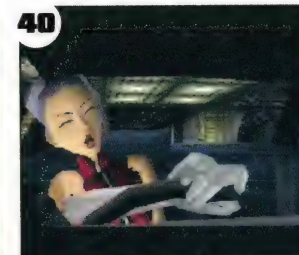
OUT OF THE RUBBISH DUMP THROUGH A SMALL DOOR, DOWN ANOTHER CORRIDOR YOU THEN STUMBLE ACROSS SOME SORT OF VEHICLE-LOADING BAY. AIM FOR THE CRATE OF EXPLOSIVES TO WIPE OUT A SMALL ARMY OF WRONGDOERS.



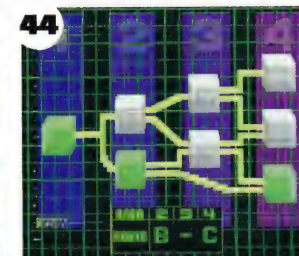
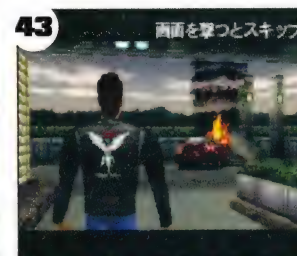
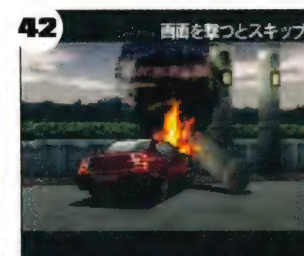
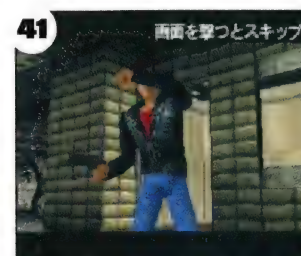
AFTER MOVING UP TO SOME OF THE ASSAULT VEHICLES, AND COPING WITH CLOSE COMBAT, ACTION MOVES ON TO THE EXECUTIVE CAR PARK. RED NINJAS POSE THE GREATEST THREAT TO LIFE UNTIL...



REMEMBER THOSE PARKED-UP ASSAULT VEHICLES? WELL SOMEONE SEEMS TO HAVE FOUND A SET OF KEYS. ARMED WITH MACHINE GUNS, HIGH EXPLOSIVE ROUNDS AND HUGE STOMPING FEET, TIMING DUCKS IS ESSENTIAL.



ANOTHER GROUP OF NINJAS SWING INTO THE SCREEN, BEFORE A RED CAR TRIES TO RAM YOU. UNLOAD TWO CLIPS OF AMMO THEN SIT BACK AND WATCH KANTARIS LOOSE CONTROL OF HER VEHICLE.



THIS ROUTE, WHICH IS THE EASIEST TO GET THROUGH, ENDS WITH KANTARI'S CAR ENGULFED IN FLAMES. THE MAP SHOWS HOW MANY MORE SECTIONS ARE AVAILABLE. BELIEVE US WHEN WE TELL YOU COMPLETING ALL POSSIBLE AREAS WILL TAKE SOME TIME.



RAGE RACER

"A STUNNING GAME"

Play Magazine

94%

"RAGE RACER BREAKS ALL THE MOULDS, PUSHING EVERYTHING TO THE LIMIT"

93%

PlayStation Plus



namco

RAGE RACER £39.99 RRP. PLAYSTATION GAMES FROM £19.99 RRP.



SONY



DO NOT
UNDERESTIMATE
THE POWER
OF PLAYSTATION

KNOW THINE ENEMY



Infantryman: Cannon fodder in sunglasses. A poor shot with a weak weapon (oer).



Infantry Squad Leader: Slightly more accurate than his squaddies but still poses little threat.



Bonus-time Soldier: Unable to inflict any damage but worth 3 or 5 second time bonuses.



Shielded Infantryman: Hides behind sheets of steel. Can only be hit when exposed.



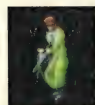
Grenadier: Likes to roll out from behind cover, lob a grenade, then hide again – swine.



Club Wielder: Jumps up right under your nose and swings for the face. Kill quickly or else...



Recoilless Rifleman: This chap has a habit of shooting his own structures when shot up.



Machine Gunner: Not a great aim but lays down bursts of fire that often catch you out.



Marksman: Fast and horribly accurate. Needs to be treated as your top priority.



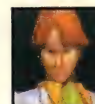
Whitecoat: Found in the throne room and laboratory. Carries a variety of weapons.



Ninja: Wears body armour and packs a nasty slash thanks to giant steel claws.



Ninja Leader: Same basic features as his minions, but takes more hits to destroy.



Sherudo Garo: Last member of the monarchy. Throws knives very quickly then vanishes.



Wild Dog: The final boss starts off using two rapid firing pistols, then gets out a machine gun.

MECHANISED WEAPONS

Cars attempt hit-and-runs but can be shot up. Helicopters act as troop transporters and assault weapons. Gun turrets fire high explosives but blast the operator and the threat is over.



(LEFT 1-3) SHOOTING DOWN HELICOPTERS IS NO EASY TASK, SO WATCHING THEM CRASH AND BURN IS ALL THE MORE SATISFYING.



Continued from page 39. ►►

Wipe the drool from your mouth for a moment though, as we recap on the original plotline: Sercia is a small republic ruled by a president who brought down the tyrannical rule of the previous Imperial order. After a long period of peace and stability in the republic an emergency is announced. Rachel, daughter of the president of Sercia, has been kidnapped. It's understood that Sherudo Garo, last blood relative of the Royal family, is responsible for the crime. He is demanding military secrets in exchange for Rachel's life.

As an organised crime syndicate known as Wild Dogs is also known to be involved in the kidnapping, it seems likely Sherudo is plotting to overthrow the Sercia government. The small republic is in great danger. Although the president could easily send in armed forces, action of this kind would almost certainly lead to the death of his beloved daughter. There is no other option. The president calls for the one man who can make a difference. That man is you, Special Agent Richard Miller.

En route to the republic you receive mission details. Sherudo lives in an old castle



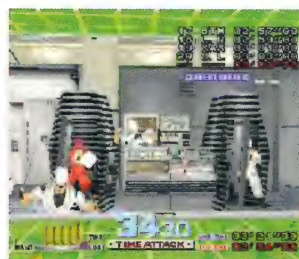
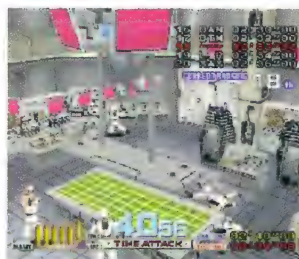
MISFITS

Cut-price PlayStations may be a good thing, but these machines lack composite RGB ports (red, white and yellow plugs) instead opting for a single RF port. That means if you own one of these machines you'll need an adapter. These are already available in Japan and plug into the AV multi-out.



THE BIG SHOWDOWN

	VIRTUA COP (Arcade)	VIRTUA COP (Saturn)	TIME CRISIS (Arcade)	TIME CRISIS (PlayStation)
In a Nutshell	Standard gun game with 3D graphics.	Nothing added to the arcade version.	Be James Bond and battle against time.	Be James Bond in two movies.
Features	Hostages to save, various weapons to pick up, idiot sights warn of targets.	Nothing added to the arcade version.	Tons of enemies at once, time limits, protection when reloading.	Arcade plus extra game with multiple routes, new bosses and enemies.
Playability	Hectic but pretty mindless. Always feels firmly planted on rails.	Nothing added to the arcade version.	Requires lightning reactions and thought to avoid injury / beat clock.	Extra game takes best of original then adds more. Harder to complete.
Overall	In it's day wowed many but has become dated.	Nothing added to the arcade version	Still feels innovative, exciting and totally addictive	Arcade perfect with <i>Time Crisis 2</i> thrown in - unbeatable.



Imperial Rule. Get to him before he has the chance. Use maximum force, shoot on sight and shoot to kill. Go, go, go.

LASTS A LIFETIME
Split into three hefty stages, which break down to nine very long levels and three boss areas,

Time Crisis will take even those with ultra-quick reactions some time to complete. Each section comprises a fistful of sets populated by as many as 20 bad guys. Even though everything is very much set on rails, the game never feels static or dull. This is partly thanks to the super-fast and smooth ducking ability and partly because so many things are constantly happening on screen.

Objects such as hooks, cranes and packing machines go about their business, many of which need to be avoided as they come into view otherwise Richard ends up with a face full of metal.

Then there are the deadly mounted weapons; hit-and-run cars and helicopters buzzing around your head. Doors can be shot closed; wall supports knocked out; pillars felled and crates of explosives detonated, throwing hoods sprawling through the air. Sensory overload! Between sections Richard dashes down corridors, dives out of windows and slides down zip lines. And even though the player has no control over these, the sheer speed and quality of these views really keeps the adrenalin pumping.

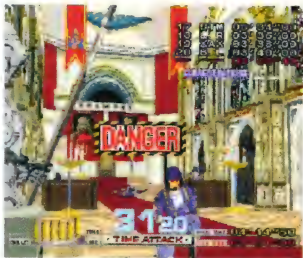
Put simply this conversion of *Time Crisis* is the dog's bol-

locks. A game of this quality just should not be possible on the PlayStation. On top of this Namco has included a new game taking Richard Miller into a hotel under control of an arms dealer. Here, graphics actually look better than in the arcade mode and levels seem to have been planned with even more thought. As a total package *Time Crisis* could well prove to be the best thing that's ever happened to the PlayStation. What's more, As an example of how Namco can now convert 'unconvertable' System 22 games the outlook for *Tekken 3* is looking better than ever.

on the north-west island of the republic. You must enter his home quickly and save the gorgeous Rachel before anyone can harm her. This will be no easy task as Sherudo's home is heavily fortified and full of highly trained mercenaries. A deadline for reply to the kidnapping demands has been set for sunset, so there's very little time.

Apart from Rachel's untimely demise, failure on your part will also mean nothing stands in the way of Sherudo invading the republic and overthrowing the legal government. He will certainly murder the president for destroying the old

(RIGHT) FINAL STAGES OF THE STORY MODE. GETTING HERE ON THE PLAYSTATION IS MORE DIFFICULT THAN IT WAS AT THE ARCADES.



IMPORT REVIEW

All shots used have been taken from the Japanese release, but there seems to be very little difference between NTSC code and the version to be released in this country. However we've decided to hold back on a full review until a full English version becomes available. In the meantime make do with this rating for the Jap version.

97

SATURDAY MORNING

**SPOTS? TRY THIS. IT'S NEW
CLEARASIL COMPLETE. IT'S FIVE TIMES BETTER
THAN SOAP AND IT'S DEAD SIMPLE!**

**SOUNDS A BIT
LIKE YOU!**

THAT'S RIGHT, DEAD SIMPLE! NEW CLEARASIL COMPLETE FACEWASH IS JUST WHAT YOU NEED TO HELP PREVENT ZITS.

CLEARASIL COMPLETE IS FIVE TIMES BETTER THAN ORDINARY SOAP AT BEATING SPOTS* AND IS AVAILABLE IN AN EASY TO USE PUMP ACTION BOTTLE.

ITS DEEP-CLEANSING MICROBEAD FORMULA AND SPECIAL SPOT STUFF GETS RIGHT TO THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM, KILLING BACTERIA WHICH CAN CAUSE UNWANTED ZITS.

USED EVERYDAY CLEARASIL COMPLETE WILL HELP KEEP YOUR SKIN FEELING CLEAN AND FRESH. ALTOGETHER, IT'S A VERY SIMPLE WAY TO HELP STAY ZIT-FREE.

ALL YOU NEED TO HELP BEAT SPOTS!



*CLINICAL STUDY RUN OVER 8 WEEK PERIOD.

PSYGNOSIS
LOOKS TO BE
ADDING YET
ANOTHER
HIGH-QUALITY
GAME TO THEIR
RANGE.
COLONY
WARS COULD
CHANGE THE
FACE OF 3D
SHOOT'EM UPS
FOREVER.



Colony Wars



We get used to overblown claims here at PlayStation Plus. But when a game reckons it, 'combines arcade action with epic drama, thrusting the player into a galactic adventure of carefully orchestrated battles and missions', it's hardly surprising if the alarm bells start to ring. Visions of cinematic sequences and tedious gameplay à la *Wing Commander* or *Rebel Assault* tend to spring instantly to mind. Oh dear.

But stop right there, because this particular public relations claim is being made

for *Colony Wars* by Psygnosis, and with each passing day of development this monster title is looking slicker, smoother and more stunning. With three months left before its release, the result could completely dissolve our brains. And let's face it, we're big fans of dissolved brains here.

PANTY TIES

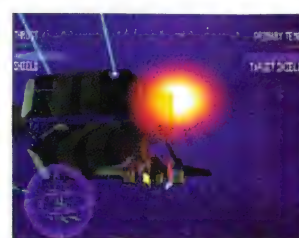
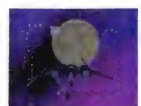
It may be a blood relative of just about every other space shooter in existence, but *Colony Wars* is nevertheless a shocking real-time 3D experience. Since its focus is dog-fight combat against a huge variety of enemies, the

emphasis is on lightning-quick reactions rather than thought-out moves, so *Colony Wars* promises to be a fast and furious experience.

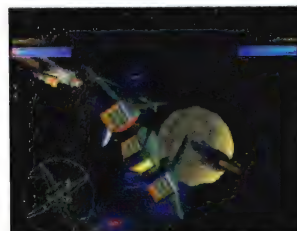
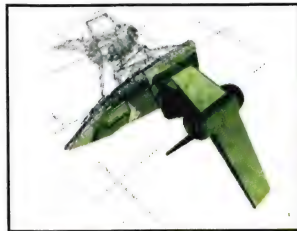
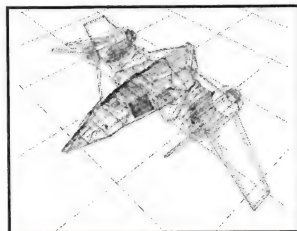
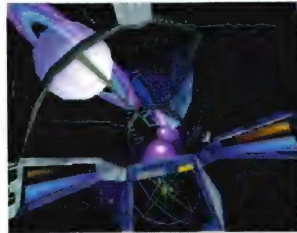
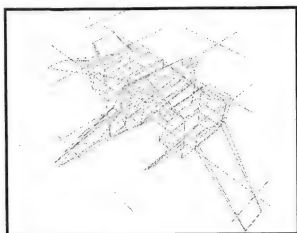
Aside from the rather attractive end sequences, the motivation for all the speed and fury comes via the old 'defeating the evil empire' number. Strangely though, for perhaps the first time ever you're actually being asked to battle the Earth rather than save it. How? Well, in a far distant future medical science has realised its ultimate goal and discovered a cure for old age. Not surprisingly this has left Earth overcrowded with peo-

ple who are now poor and starving, so a decision has been taken to expand into other solar systems. Mass colonisation of space begins.

Several centuries later Earth is once again booming. The planet's oppressive central government controls an empire of five solar systems including 40 colonised worlds. As you would, these planets become increasingly unhappy with the idea of slaving away for distant and cruel rulers, so a rebellion - called the League Of Free Worlds - is formed. Earth's imperial leader, the Tsar, wants to end this threat quickly and sends out part of



Release : NOVEMBER
Company : PSYGNOSIS
Price : TBA
Players : 1
Genre : SHOOT'EM UP



his Navy fleet to crush the uprising. Against all odds the League actually wins this first battle fought around its central planet of Bennay - perhaps there is still hope for the underdogs...

Fired up by such an historic victory, the League now plans to take the fight for freedom directly to the Navy. And here - at last - is where the game begins. The player takes on the role of one of the thousands of fresh young recruits who have joined the League. Their aim is to fight the dictators under whom they have been forced to cower all their lives.

Yes, this may all sound terribly familiar, especially in terms of influences from the world of the silver screen, but who cares if *Colony Wars* boasts some really impressive features and looks simply stunning?

SHARP-DRESSED

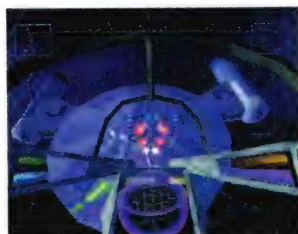
The reason *Colony Wars* has such high-quality visuals is that the game runs in high-resolution mode which, up until now, has been greatly underused. This means graphics are much sharper and detailed, with many more polygons possible on the screen at any one time. Six different craft are at the player's disposal, all rendered and texture-mapped. In addition to that, various viewpoints can be used, and from outside it's possible to see light bouncing off the body of the ship or the mad vapour trails emitted by the engine. Other spaceships appear to have been created with just as much rigorous attention to detail, and with 56 ally and enemy craft to deal with, the game should feel far from repetitive.

Surroundings ought to be equally impressive as the programmers, who were responsible for coding the *Wipeout* games, have taken time to create five realistically scaled and modelled solar systems. Planets, moons, nebulae, asteroids and thousands of stars have been fully textured and light sourced to produce a totally believable 3D space environment.

Judging by the playable code we've been shown so far, the result is like being able to interact with your very own Hollywood blockbuster - a claim that's often made, but rarely justified.

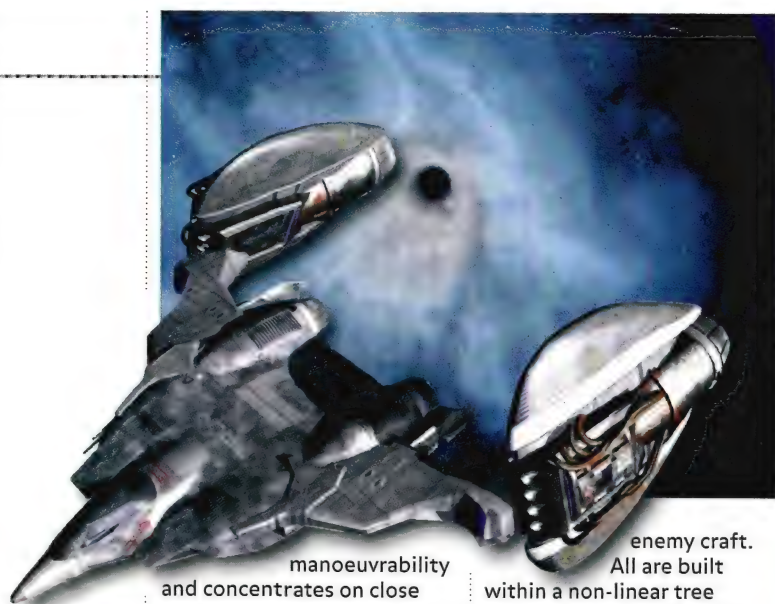
STRICTLY ARCADE

As Psygnosis is concentrating on trying to produce an arcade-style shoot'em up which has basic controls, fast



SONY'S VIBRATOR

Psygnosis is giving its full backing to the new analogue pad from Sony and *Colony Wars* best demonstrates how much fun can be had from a vibrating controller. When the action starts to heat up the thumb buttons buzz and shake like crazy, with vibrations getting even more intense as your craft nears a critical state. Besides adding more depth to the game, the vibrations serve as a warning when someone is taking pot shots at you from behind. Let's hope EEC regulations and cost problems don't hold up the release of the vibrating wonder in this country.



manoeuvrability and concentrates on close combat dogfights, a great deal of effort has gone into making the game move like lightning. Despite all the sumptuous graphics and fancy effects - which must rank as some of the most impressive yet seen on Sony's machine - Psygnosis report that *Colony Wars* runs at a blistering 30 frames per second and is smoother than a baby's bottom.

COLONY WARS COMBINES UTTERLY STUNNING SPECIAL EFFECTS WITH AMAZINGLY FAST AND FLUID GAME-PLAY.

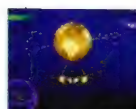
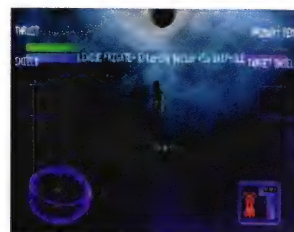
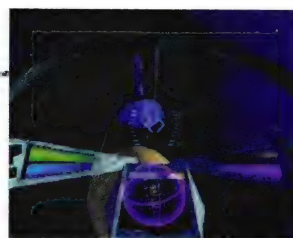
The game is broken down into 18 acts. Within these are 70 distinct missions in addition to half a dozen training episodes and six different ending sequences. Some routes through the game require the player to scout and use stealth, others are centred on bombing runs, heavy assault attacks, or interception of waves of

enemy craft. All are built within a non-linear tree structure, the workings of which are kept hidden from the player.

Success or failure of a mission will take the player through different routes so no two games should ever be the same.

To continue the movie feeling, full orchestral music with individual themes for each mission accompanies the strictly space-based action. There's speech from the crew of other ships, headquarters is in constant contact and your own vehicle talks away to you.

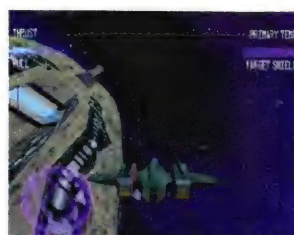
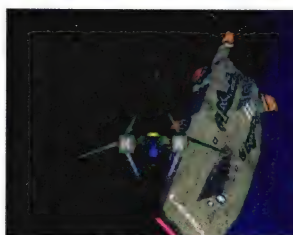
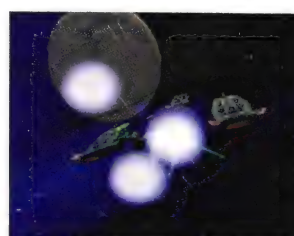
What's more, lavish full motion video sequences, strongly influenced by the likes of *Babylon Five*, *Star Wars* and *Star Trek*, update the storyline as battles are won and lost. Editing, choice



of camera angles and the use of 25 actors for the voiceovers should leave the player reaching for the popcorn and telling the woman in front to take off that hat.

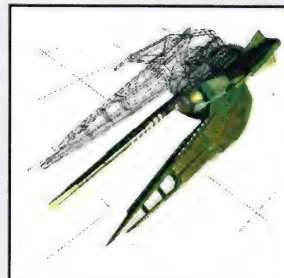
If all that doesn't leave you panting for *Colony Wars* you probably bought this magazine by mistake. If, on the other hand, your breath is well and truly bated, keep an eye out for a review just as soon as we get our hands on the finished game.

THE CODERS HAVE BUILT 70 MISSIONS INTO COLONY WARS. VARIOUS ROUTES CAN BE TAKEN THROUGH THE GAME AND THESE LEAD TO DIFFERENT ENDINGS.



BIG SCREEN INFLUENCES

Cinematic references are obvious in FMV sequences but also extend through every aspect of the game, from explosions and gunfire to ships and the backdrop of planets. These look to have been handled well, steering clear of obvious rip offs, instead taking influences from the best sci-fi has to offer and developing a unique style for *Colony Wars*. Take a look at a few of the craft which will be available to the and play 'spot the film'.



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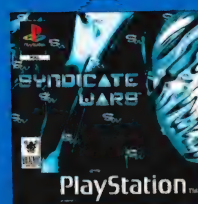
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Croc



it would be impossible to contest in a court of law, so let's be frank. *Croc* owes a lot to *Mario 64*. There, we've said it. However, as anyone who has played the N64 masterpiece will tell you, this is by no means a bad thing. Until now, the PlayStation's platform game crown has spent time with both *Pandemonium!* and *Crash Bandicoot*, neither of which can hold a candle to the Nintendo game. With *Croc*, however, Fox presents a definite alternative. As with the Nintendo game, *Croc* is set within a 3D world, inhabited by all manner of cute but deadly adversaries. The similarities continue with the moves and modes of transport available to the reptilian hero. Following mastery of the basic running and jumping, our hero - the Croc of the title - also possesses a spin-

GOBBOS ARE OFTEN IMPRISONED WITHIN LOCKED CRATES. THE KEYS FOR WHICH ARE FOUND ELSEWHERE IN THE LEVEL.



ning attack, a bum-bounce move, swimming skills, balloons and climbing abilities for the player to master.

MOVE OVER GEX
Croc out-cutes Gex in the reptile stakes, and in an unintentional dig at Lara Croft also sports the latest in adventurer fashions: a rucksack. Whereas Lara's was there to store weapons and compensate for the weight of her impressive chest, Croc's contains a small bird which acts as a link to the game's six islands.

The game's scenario tells how these once-peaceful islands have been taken over by one Baron Dante. Dante,

in the tradition of his Nintendo counterparts, Wario and Bowzer, has cast a spell over every animal across the six islands, turning them into vicious mutants. His wrath also extended to the natives of the islands - the Gobbos - who he has imprisoned throughout the scrolling play area. Stepping into our scaly hero's shoes, the basic idea is to free as many Gobbos as possible and locate Dante's base at the end of the sixth stage.

The six islands are broken up into over 60 sub-levels which, while short, contain a wealth of power-ups and collectables. *Croc's* similarity to *Mario 64* is even more promi-

nent here, as the pursuit of bonus objects and points leads our hero into secret worlds and rooms laden with treasures. Booty to Croc takes the form of Crystal Maze-style gems, found within packaging crates punctuating the play area. These crates are either lying on the ground, or can be seen defying gravity above our hero's head. This is where the beauty of *Croc's* 3D engine is shown to the full.

LOVELY MOVIE
As the little handbag-in-waiting trots around the play area, an intelligent camera system pans around for the best possible view. ordinary-



Release : SEPTEMBER
Company : Fox
Price : TBA
Players : 1
Genre : PLATFORM



ly, this is directly behind Croc. However, it may switch to the side slightly when he steps on to a moving platform; or pull back to reveal the aforementioned crates floating above him.

Crates are destroyed with a double press of the jump button prompting one of Croc's 'bum-bounce' moves to reveal clusters of six gems within. Dante has also used the crates to hide several of the kidnapped Gobbos, and just touching one of the stricken creatures is enough to warp them to safety.

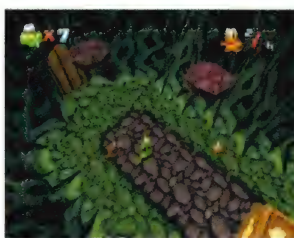
While the premise of collecting gems is hardly original, it is the general panache of *Croc* which ensures it isn't just another *Floating Runner* or *Crash Bandicoot*. The Mario influence works to the game's advantage, with the developers ensuring the hero is equipped for every event-

ality. Extra modes of transport are dripped into the game effortlessly, all the time prompting the player to hone their skills and attempt new tricks. As the themed islands are explored, Croc is seen swinging from hand to hand, swimming, using balloons to fly, and clambering up sheer walls.

Nothing new, admittedly, but each new string to Croc's many bows is gently dropped into play and is a doddle to pick up.

THE GANG'S ALL HERE

Croc uses every trick in the platforming book, and the trek to Dante's lair is fraught with danger. Moving and collapsing platforms, switch-operated ledges, ice stages, and boss creatures swanning around the final stage on each island. With such an



impressive cast of enemies and hazards, it comes as no surprise that Croc starts the game with six extra lives in tow. However, the aforementioned gems also act a shield between Croc and the after-life. Although his bum-bounce and tail-spinning moves are more than adequate cover against the mutated animals, the KO'd mutants reappear seconds after to continue their onslaught. If their reincarnation catches the player unawares, though, and Croc comes into contact with a mutant, he is temporarily stunned and any gems collected are scattered around him. While this does nothing for the little fellow's gem bonus at the end of the stage, it does act as an 'extra life' since Croc dies if he is touched again without the protective gems.

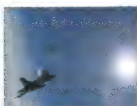
BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Unless a platform game comes packed to the gunnells with hidden rooms and secret locations these days, it invariably ends up in the file marked 'dated.' With this in mind, *Croc* is more than suitably equipped with both bonus rooms and secret locations. The former are shown as black doors, encrusted with coloured gems. These special gems are dotted around each level, and hidden away in every conceivable nook and cranny. Thus, although the player can opt to simply find the level exit, die-hard *Croc* players will want to snap up as many extra goodies as possible. The hidden areas, on the other hand, are only found when certain procedures are followed – or if potentially deadly risks are taken...





Air Combat 2 HAS ALL THE THRILLS AND SPILLS OF PILOTING YOUR VERY OWN JET, FINDING THE ENEMY AND SHOOTING THE CRAP OUT OF THEM. WHAT MORE COULD YOU WANT IN A GAME?



not content with mastering the fighting and driving genres, Namco takes to the skies once more with this *Air Combat* follow-up. There are now 30 missions as opposed to the original's 16 but the premise of the game remains the same: Fly missions for money, then use the money to buy planes. This time, however, the missions are more complex and they get progressively tougher throughout. What's more, Wingmen can now be hired to cover your tail in the air.



With all this in mind, it's time to pull on your flying jacket, don your helmet and goggles and look a complete prat as you check out *Air Combat 2*.

STAY ON TARGET

The missions take place as part of a large military campaign following a coup d'état. As a member of the special strikeforce 'Scarface', it's up to the player to help vanquish the enemy and liberate the country. Or in other words, have lots of fun blowing stuff up and tearing through the skies.

Before setting out on each



mission there's a briefing showing where the targets and friendly forces are and explaining the objectives. These can then be revised at leisure before starting the mission. To complete each mission there are a number of primary targets to destroy, including installations, such as radar sites, and vehicles, such as planes, tanks and ships. As well as these there are also secondary targets where destruction isn't necessary to finish a stage, but worth extra money and status. After the briefing, it's time to choose your aircraft



and decide whether or not you want a wingman before hitting the clouds.

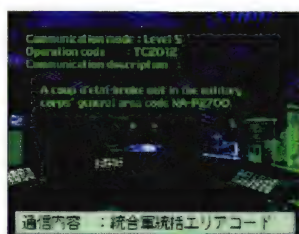
Take off is handled automatically, so all missions start with the plane almost at the target area, getting straight into the action. On-screen information is taken care of thanks to an HUD which shows the altitude, air-speed, and direction. Other air and ground objects are shown on the radar, which switches between short, medium and long range scans. Targeting is just a matter of getting in range and waiting for the firing tone



Release : IMPORT
Company : NAMCO
Price : IMPORT
Players : 1
Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP



Air Combat 2's GRAPHICAL BEAUTY COMES IN THE FORM OF SCENERY AND BACK-DROPS WITH DETAILED TERRAIN AND INSTALLATIONS TO FEAST YOUR EYES ON - BEFORE BOMBING THEM.



before firing your missiles. This usually works fine for static ground targets, but with aircraft the shots have to be chosen with care, since they don't usually sit still long enough - damn inconsiderate! Some planes dodge and loop all over the place, and staying on their tail means using manoeuvres which would make even the Red Arrows shudder. Huge screaming powerdives followed by pull-ups just a few feet from the ground or loop-the-loops with half-twists are some of the more incredible moves possible.

If the missiles run out (unlikely, as most planes have about 60) a machine gun with infinite ammo is available for close-up kills.

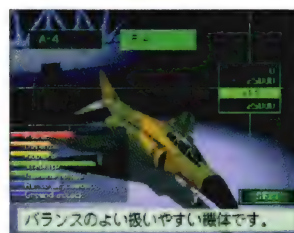
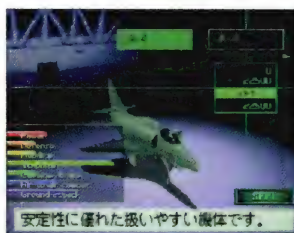
Since most targets will be destroyed from a great distance, the main eyecandy comes from the scenery.

There are a lot of different terrain types, from arctic to desert as well as sea levels, and even though they are massive areas, the dreaded pop-up should be kept to a minimum. In fact, for the amount of ground detail the game moves incredibly quickly. The installations also look good, especially the space shuttle on the launchpad, the oil rig, and the aircraft carriers. Flying through a city at night has to be the graphical pinnacle of the game and squeezing between two buildings while flying at a high speed is also a great thrill, especially if you can survive it!

BIGGER AND BETTER
One of the problems with the original *Air Combat* was its brevity. This has been addressed by increasing the number of planes the player

can access. If a mission is completed, with a large number of secondary targets destroyed, in addition to receiving a medal, a new plane will be available for purchase. The F22 Stealth Fighter is the best and can make missions a lot easier. The 30 missions can't all be played in the same game, because every few missions a choice is offered as to what

the next operation will be. This means the game will have to be played through quite a few times before all missions have been seen, and thus all planes collected. With these new additions, it looks like Namco has addressed the problems which plagued the first *Air Combat*, providing some top flying action for armchair pilots everywhere.



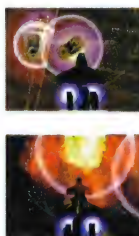
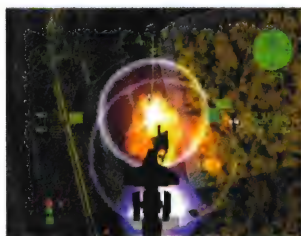
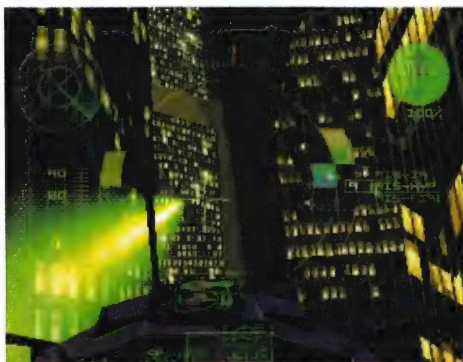
AFTER THE BRIEFING CHOOSE THE RIGHT JET FOR THE MISSION AND DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO HAVE A WINGMAN.



IT'S NOT ALL SHOOTING YOU KNOW

Air Combat 2 offers a wide variety of challenging missions for budding pilots. Some levels require the plane to be landed on an aircraft carrier. One forces the player to stay below 600 feet in order to avoid radar detection. In one your radar is jammed so you can't see where the enemy is until they're right on top of you. In another, there's a power station which can't be blown up until a certain time, and then it's only vulnerable for 90 seconds. Oh yes, and you have to fly inside it! There's even a mission where your missiles can't target certain enemies, meaning they have to be destroyed with machine guns. So, unless you want to end up as a nasty smear on the ground, you'd better polish up your flying skills!





IF YOU'RE SCARED OF HEIGHTS IT'S BEST NOT TO LOOK DOWN. THE DETAIL OF G-POLICE'S GRAPHICS IS SUCH THAT NOT ONLY DOES THE CITY LOOK INCREDIBLE, BUT THE SENSATION OF HEIGHT IS AMAZING.



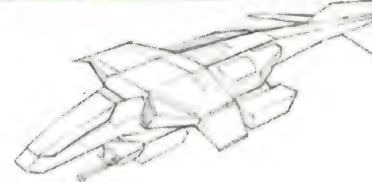
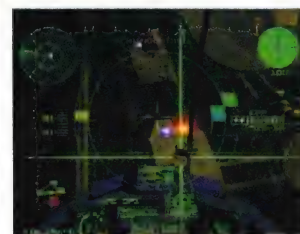
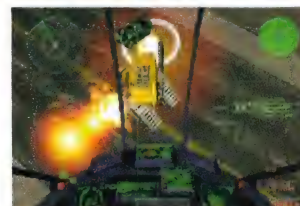
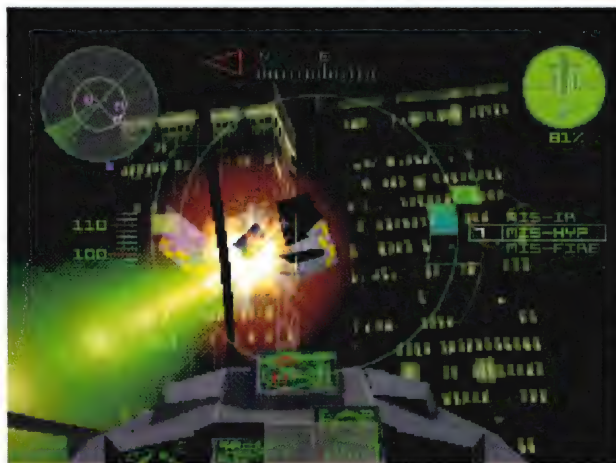
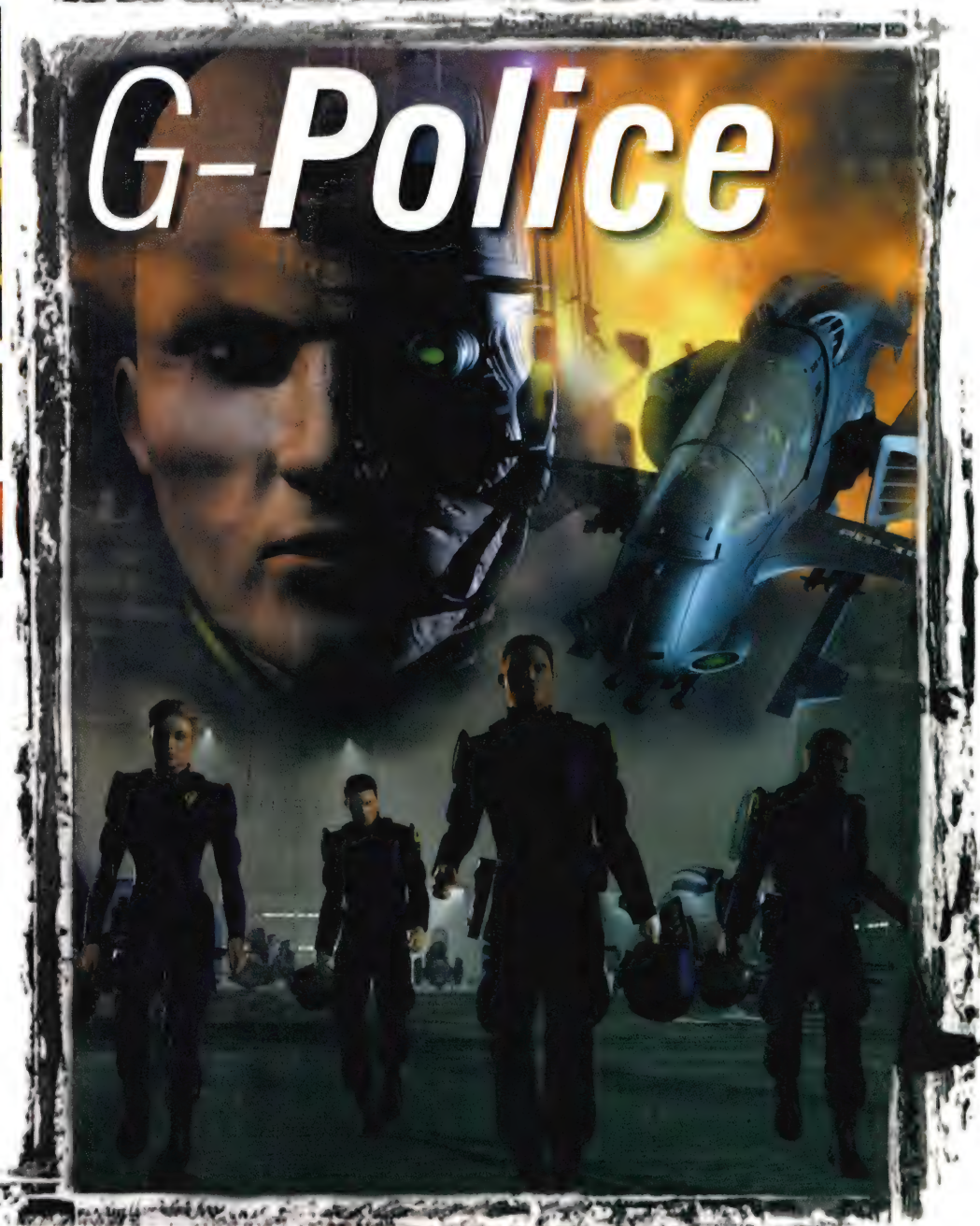
who'd live in the future, eh? According to just about every science fiction book, film or game, it's going to be a bleak overcrowded place filled with giant skyscrapers and ruled by mysterious and shadowy corporations. Not exactly the most friendly of places to visit.

But don't worry, because in the future according to *G-Police*, there'll be loads of cool weapons to play with and tons of people to shoot. The reason for this is that, come the year 2097 big business has taken over the running of society and corporations have their own private law enforcement group called, oddly enough, the G-Police (G standing for Government). These are used to keep the peace on the companies' territories, which in this case is a mining colony on Callisto – one of Jupiter's moons in case you haven't been keeping up with *The Sky At Night* recently. People live and work in giant domed cities filled with skyscrapers and plenty of ground and air traffic.

As G-Cop Jeff Slater (made-up name!) the player has to pilot a HAVOC gunship through the cities, bringing law to the lawless. A bit like *Blue Thunder* in the future if you will (or even if you won't). Except without rotor blades.

Release : NOVEMBER
Company : PSYGNOSIS
Price : £44.95
Players : 1
Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP

G-Police



CITY HAVOC

The HAVOC, you see, is a 'vector thrust gunship'. Just imagine a Harrier Jump Jet version of a helicopter and you won't be far wrong. This is the ideal craft for the city domes, since it has two different flight modes. The first is the standard flying mode, but the second holds the gunship in mid-air. This effectively turns it into a floating gun turret, since the cockpit can be pointed in any direction to allow for easy targeting of the ship's weapon system. And what a



weapons system it is. The HAVOC is equipped with a seriously deadly array of big boy's toys capable of turning your average criminal mastermind into toast in a flash. One of the most powerful weapons is the 1000kg bomb, a devastating air-to-ground weapon easily targeted thanks to a laser sighting device. But if laser sighting isn't enough, the viewpoint can be changed to a top-down view allowing better aiming. This is just one of *G-Police*'s many camera views which meaning there's never any excuse for being able to see properly. There's the obvious in-cockpit and third-person views, but the most exciting will be used with Sony's new analogue joypad. While one of the sticks on the pad will be used to give more subtle movement to the gunship, the other will allow



THE CITY MIGHT LOOK DARK AND GLOOMY, BUT THIS MAKES IT ALL THE MORE SPECTACULAR WHEN IT'S ILLUMINATED BY FIRING OFF THE HAVOC GUNSHIP'S MANY WEAPONS.

the player to move the pilot's head independently of the ship, meaning they can look in one direction while moving in another. And there's certainly a lot to look at.

WELCOME TO THE FUTURE

If there's one thing Psygnosis knows about, it's creating 3D future worlds. *WipeOut 2097* and *Tenka* are testament to that. *G-Police* takes things a great deal further by creating cityscapes hailing from the Blade Runner school of town planning, with mammoth skyscrapers lining the streets and plenty of futuristic traffic, both on the ground and in the air. Lighting effects and details such as rotating billboards and flaming chimneys add to the sense of the game taking place in a proper city rather than a dull landscape. The domes also vary

THE HEADS-UP DISPLAY GIVES THE ROOKIE G-COP ALL THE INFO THEY NEED TO KEEP THE GUNSHIP IN THE AIR. RADAR, ALTIMETER AND WEAPONS READOUTS ARE ALL THERE TO BE STUDIED.



throughout the game's 35 missions with industrial, agricultural and wasteland just some of the different types. The missions themselves are of course shoot 'em up based, featuring both air-to-air and air-to-ground combat, and are linked together to form a plot created by a professional scriptwriter which revolves around Slater investigating his sister's death. She was also a HAVOC pilot, and died in mysterious circumstances. As the game progresses, so does the plot, as well as the availability of helpful weapons and the complexity (and therefore toughness) of the missions. Slater also receives more allies as the game goes on, gaining control of wingmen and ground units who talk to our hero as the action demands it.

Psygnosis' claim that this could be the Christmas number one doesn't look completely unfounded, since the game is currently looking very good indeed and offers the all-important factor of being able to blow up just about everything in sight with some astounding weaponry and some awesome lighting effects. If they can make the gameplay match the looks (and their claims) then come autumn there should be some very happy wannabe G-Cops around indeed.

KEEPING AN EYE ON THE STREETS IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS WATCHING THE SKIES, SINCE THERE'S PLENTY OF GROUND TRAFFIC OUT THERE. THEY BLOW UP NICELY TOO.

**G-SHOCK**

In order to survive in the hostile world that is Callisto, the G-Police's HAVOC gunships are armed with a deadly arsenal of weaponry. Here's some information on just a few of the ballistic beauties you'll be able to get your homicidal paws on.

LAVOCHKIN 30MM

The HAVOC's standard weapon is this 30mm cannon, which fires 10 shots a second and comes with Armour Piercing and Explosive rounds. In order to help with targeting, every tenth shot is also a tracer round to show exactly where those deadly shells are going.

HYPERVELOCITY MISSILE

Hitting the target almost instantaneously after being fired, this missile will continue to pass through targets until it hits something tough enough to make it stop.

HENSCHEL STARBURST DISPERSION MISSILES

Great for multiple targets or just making one enemy dead very quickly, the Starburst missiles come in groups of eight, and are fired simultaneously. After pausing for a second to lock on, the missiles will seek out any target/s in the area.

PLASMA LAUNCHER

A powerful energy weapon, this gun can be charged up to deliver a devastating bolt of energy which will do serious mega-damage to any craft stupid enough to be in the way.

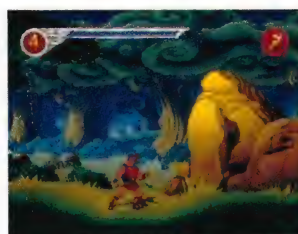
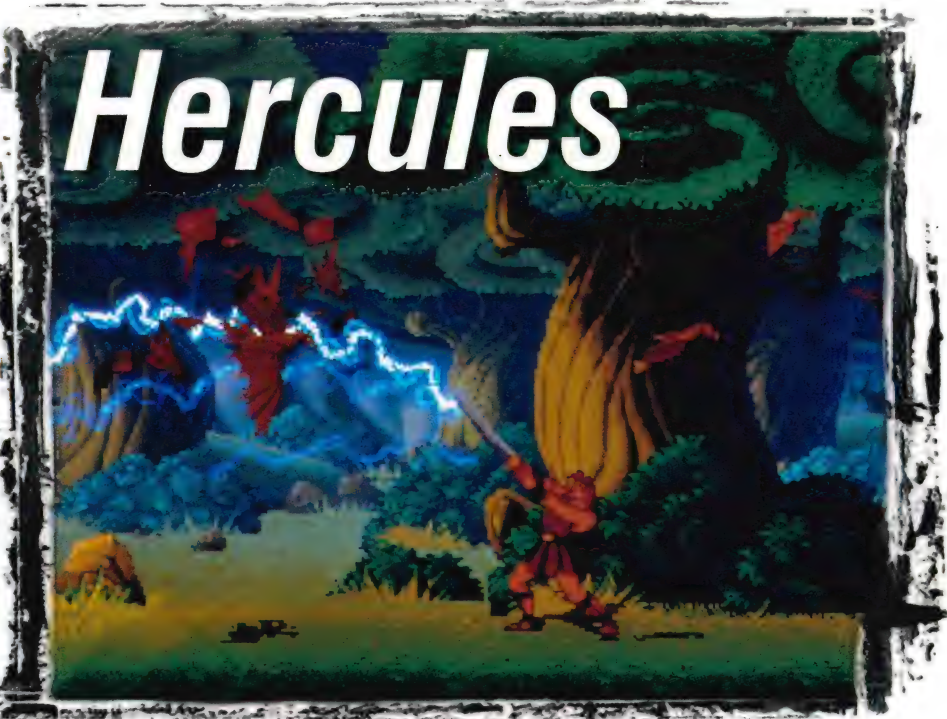


HERCULES
DEFINITELY
SHOWS ITS
DISNEY ROOTS
WITH ITS
WELL-DRAWN
BACKGROUNDS
AND SUPERBLY
ANIMATED
CHARACTERS.



Two years into the time tunnel that is the PlayStation and we've got a busty female heroine in *Tomb Raider*, head-munching zombies in *Resident Evil* and murderous martial artists in *Tekken*. Are we satisfied? No, because there's hardly any games based on a Disney cartoon. Common they may have been on the 16bit machines (remember *Aladdin* and *The Lion King*?) but the mouse has barely had a sniff around the Sony skirting board. This is all set to change with the PlayStation game of Disney's 35th animated feature, *Hercules*.

A character in Greek mythology, Hercules was the mortal son of Zeus, the king of the Gods and had superhuman strength. In the film, he's been stripped of his



Godhood by Hades, the lord of the underworld, and must battle with him as well as a host of other monsters in order to defeat the villain and rescue his true love Meg.

The game looks to have a lot of depth in terms of graphics and gameplay since levels come in two different styles. Some use the side-scrolling platformer style of Disney game tradition, with Hercules wandering in and out of the screen, while others see him walking into the action in a *Crash Bandicoot*-style.

This mixing of styles, together with some great-looking graphics (Disney do know a fair bit about drawing and animating characters after all) and sound, make this look like *Hercules* will continue the Disney videogame tradition well.

LEVEL BEST

The first two levels see Hercules training to become a hero under the tutelage of Philoctetes. This involves dodging traps and rescuing damsels in distress in order to please his teacher.

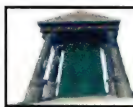
Hercules has loads of different moves to help him out as he moves through the levels. As well as the usual running and jumping he can grab hold of hooks and swing on them in order to reach hidden areas and platforms. Our hero can also use his great strength to help his progress through the levels. Firstly by smashing objects in his path with a power punch, and also to do a powerful ground-slam in order to break through platforms. He can get hold of a sword for damage duties, and it can be upgraded with



Release : OCTOBER
Company : SCEE
Price : TBA
Players : 1
Genre : PLATFORM



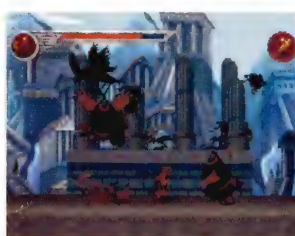
HERCULES' GRAPHICS GIVE AN ADDED SENSE OF DEPTH TO THE SIDE-SCROLLING LEVELS (RIGHT), AND OBVIOUSLY TO THE 3D LEVELS (SEE DESIGN MODELS ON THE RIGHT).



LET'S EMBARRASS ARNIE...

So you think Disney's Hercules is the first big screen treatment of this mythological hero? Think again. For back in 1970 none other than Arnold Schwarzenegger played the overly-muscled son of Zeus in his first film, Hercules in New York. Billed under the stage name of Arnold Strong (we kid you not), Arnie gets struck down from Olympus by his dad and spends the movie running about the Apple that is Big causing much mayhem in the "comedy". Sadly, it doesn't feature any great lines like "Get your ass to Olympus" or "**** you Poseidon".

But maybe he'll knock that Terminator 3 idea on the head and do a sequel. Well, you never know...



power-ups from the Gods, such as lightning from Zeus, and fire from Hephaestus (who he?). The God Hermes can also quicken his pace by giving him his magical sandals of swiftness.

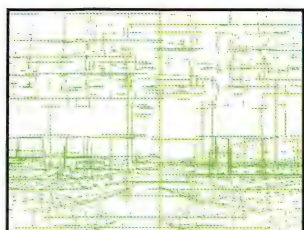
The levels themselves make great use of light-sourcing and 3D, with Hercules able to move in and out of the landscape along with the other characters he faces on the side-scrolling levels. These form the meat of the game as Hercules takes on huge bosses based on mythological creatures such as centaurs, a Cyclops and of course the many-headed Hydra, before making his way to the underworld to battle with Hades and rescue Meg. Variety is added to the game with the inclusion of the new 3D-style levels and a section where Hercules takes to the air on

his flying horse Pegasus. Longevity has apparently also been assured since levels are filled with secret areas. Even after the game has been finished, a percentage score will tell how much of the game has been explored and how much is left to find.

NOT A GREEK TRAGEDY

A lot of work has gone into the game in order to make it as worthy a film adaptation as possible. To this end, cutscenes between levels will be clips from the film itself, with a new technique being used to make quality even better. Meanwhile, the in-game graphics use over 10,000 frames of hand-drawn animation to give it that distinctive Disney 'look'. The sound has also had as much effort put into it and uses a system similar to Q-sound

(which is a 3D sound system that can make sound effects appear to be coming from all directions). Voices from the film by actors like James Woods and Danny DeVito have been included as well as some dialogue especially for the game. In addition, sound effects and music have been taken from its celluloid counterpart. With all this work behind it, and a proposed release simultaneous to the movie, *Hercules* should provide a superb videogame version of Disney's epic. Let's just hope it's good then.



Rapid Racer



QUITE HOW A DIFFERENT PROPELLER CAN IMPROVE A BOAT'S PERFORMANCE IS BEYOND US, BUT THERE ARE FIVE AVAILABLE TO STICK ON THE BACK OF THE BOAT.



Will this avalanche of racing games never end? Racers, along with fighting games, form the majority of popular titles on the PlayStation, with gamers as hungry for new spins on the genre as developers are for dreaming them up. Racing on water seems to be the latest one, with games such as *Jet Rider* on the PlayStation (and *Wave Race* on the Nintendo) showing the worst and best of what can be done. Sony's internally developed *Rapid Racer* looks like it could be one of the best, not only as a water-based game, but as a racing game full stop. This is because this particular title has some amazingly detailed graphics, some great twisty-turny courses and a wide range of tracks. The result is a game being dubbed by some industry types as 'WipeOut on water'.

RESOLUTION REVOLUTION

Pitting the lone player against seven other power-boat racers, *Rapid Racer* takes place on 18 tracks over six different courses. The courses themselves differ in style significantly, from the white and icy Alaska track to a red-hot lava course. Views come in the two basic flavours of first and third-person perspectives, the former being for the real white-knuckle riders who like to feel like they're sitting right on the

front of the boat. This may result in severe sea sickness for those with extremely weak stomachs though, so be warned. The rest of us will be sticking with third-person mode, no doubt.

Graphically the game is shaping up to be an incredible looker, testing the limits of the machine. The whole caboodle runs in the PlayStation's super-duper hi-resolution mode, which has previously been avoided by developers and is only now getting a decent look-in. The

recent *Tobal 2* was one of the first games to show off the mode to any sort of decent extent, and *Rapid Racer* is set to continue this (er, short) tradition with some of the sharpest graphics you are likely to see this year.

The water effects are incredible to look at, and waves – as well as the wake of the other boats – will affect the handling of your craft if you get caught in it. The water also sprays up as the racers travel and turn through it.



Release : OCTOBER
Company : SCE
Price : TBA
Players : 1-5
Genre : RACING



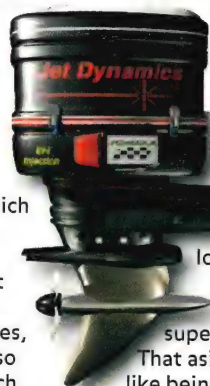
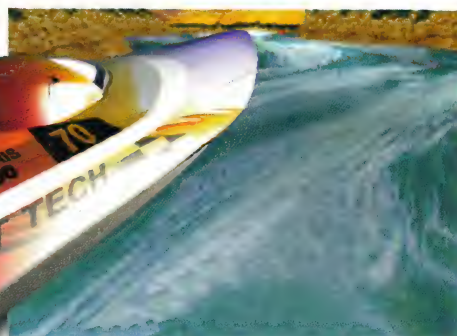
YES, FIFTY.

As well as looking good, *Rapid Racer* is also a bit of a mover. With the PAL version's graphics moving at a super-smooth 50 frames per second (even though the NTSC version moves at 60 fps, but let's not be greedy) the speed and fluidity of the game is never in question. Depth is also added with the inclusion of tracks which are played in both day and night modes, and raced backwards in a *Ridge Racer*-style mirror mode. There are also 10 boats to choose from which can be upgraded as the game goes on.

Engines, propellers and foils come in five different grades giving extra power and manoeuvrability to the souped-up boat. Crucially, two-player action is also well taken care of with a split-screen mode which can be done vertically or horizontally according to taste. And to keep better players from constantly beating novices, there's a catch-up feature which gives the second place racer a much-needed speed boost to keep them in the game. Up to five – yes, five – players can also compete against each other in a league tournament, so even though only two can play simultaneously, you can still compete against a group of people.

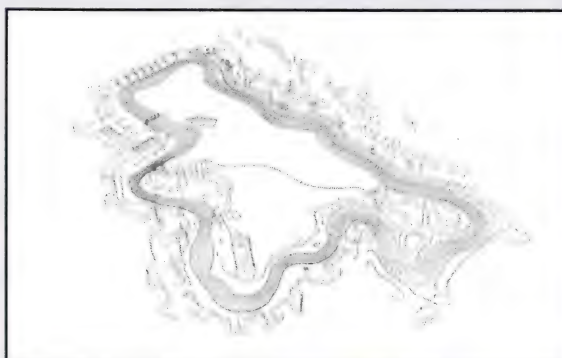
WIPEOUT ON WATER?

Sony is continuing to try and give European gamers as much quality as possible with *Rapid Racer* and not only in terms of keeping the in-game speed up. Music is becoming more and more important in racing games, with a stonking good sound-track having almost as much importance as the graphics. This was first proved in the *WipeOut* games, and *Rapid Racer* has followed suit by getting dance band Apollo 440 to provide the tunes which are exclusive to the game. *Rapid Racer* is also another of the growing number of games to support Sony's new analogue joypad, but whether it will make use of the 'rumble' effects is yet to be confirmed. With all these additions, it looks like the only thing that isn't known to be superb is the gameplay. That aside, this still looks like being an incredible package, but whether the "WipeOut on water" claim will be justified when the game comes out is another matter entirely...



I'VE GOT MORE COURSES THAN YOU...

18 courses is more than enough for most people, but for the over-demanding gamer (and let's face it, that's most of us) *Rapid Racer* offers a mode which will give the best of the best plenty to do once the game is completed. By beating the game the Fractal mode is activated which randomly generates tracks so that over 256,000 courses can be played on (why the exact number isn't known is anybody's guess maybe someone at Sony lost count). And by the time you've played all 256,018 tracks, either there'll be a sequel, or you'll be too old to hold a joypad.



IF YOU COULD DO WITH SOME MORE THRUST (AND LET'S FACE IT, WHO COULDN'T) THEN RAPID RACER OFFERS FIVE DIFFERENT ENGINES TO GIVE YOUR BOAT SOME REAL POWER.



Conquest Earth



CHOOSE TO FIGHT AS HUMANS OR ALIENS IN AN ALL-OUT BATTLE FOR PLANET EARTH. EACH SIDE HAS THEIR OWN ABILITIES ENCOURAGING DIFFERENT STYLES OF PLAY.



While *Command and Conquer* won the hearts and minds of most

strategists, some gamers were undoubtedly turned off by its approach, which seemed more geared towards a PC market than to a console audience. *Conquest Earth*, recently shown exclusively to PlayStation Plus at Data Design studios, aims to bridge the gap between shooting and thinking with a PlayStation-

specific version of *Conquest Earth* that plays much more like an arcade game.

MIXING STYLES

It's not often words like fast and furious are used to describe a strategy game, but then *Conquest Earth* is trying to break moulds. With its own game engine, redrawn sprites and a bias towards the arcade, only cut sequences and sound have been ported over from the PC. When Data Design started on a PlayStation version the idea was to create a totally hectic game which offered complete control over weaponry and soldiers, and threw in big explosions and effects. Remember *Cannon Fodder*? These boys certainly do.

Apparently the storyline is based on fact and theory knocking about today, but judge for yourself. In June of this year Galileo, the NASA space probe, ended its mission by plung-

ing into the gaseous atmosphere of Jupiter. Scientists on Earth planned to analyse the mass of technical data collected moments before the machine was vapourised.

However, boffins on our planet were not the only ones tracking the probe. Gas-based inhabitants of Jupiter were shocked to detect this bizarre, hard, alien object heading towards the centre of their home world. Where it had come from was a mystery. Data suggested SOL3, the uninhabitable solid planet with a highly poisonous Oxygen atmosphere.

Further study revealed either SOL3, or Earth, was indeed the source of this craft and was populated by a race of aggressive and warlike solids. These beings had already squandered their own planet's natural resources and it was decided

they must be looking to plunder Jupiter's rich hydrogen reserves. A meeting of Elders took what became known as the 'Genocide Vote'. Earth must have its population annihilated and the planet's environment converted to sulphur for colonisation.

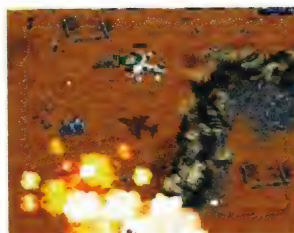
TWO FOR ONE

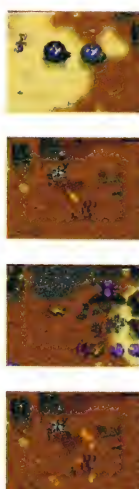
Effectively *Conquest Earth* will be two games bundled into one package.

Players will be given the opportunity to wage war as humans or aliens, but whereas many other strategy games simply reverse plots, this game contains two distinct sets of 30 missions and two very different styles of play. Pick humans for a desperate struggle, with no natural resources to rely on, but lots of weapons already available. Helicopters, tanks, jeeps, missile silos, combat satel-



Release : SEPTEMBER
Company : EIDOS
Price : £44.99
Players : 2
Genre : STRATEGY

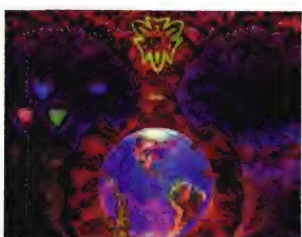




lites, and more besides are there to use.

Take up with aliens for a much sneakier approach, with less weapons, but the chance to mine materials and use lots of special abilities. Big green men can turn invisible or if they get together in a group they're able to morph into weird vehicles. Individually they can also transform into trees, rocks, tanks or even humans. Very underhand. Graphically human and alien cultures have been made to look worlds apart too. Earthling structures and machinery look modern but not over the top. Alien equipment appears to have been grown in vats and is pretty darn ugly.

With non-stop action, requiring fast thinking; complete control over every character and vehicle; live action cut sequences; huge explosions that rock the screen; simple controls; a windows system to keep track of your units, and the ability to quickly zoom in and out of the action, *Conquest Earth* intends to rewrite the concepts behind strategy games. "This is no clone", Data Design Projects Manager



to come face to face with arcade players and see who comes out on top."

According to the developers *Conquest Earth* relies on the most advanced AI system ever used in a game. Code has been derived from an advanced Neural Network technology, which is a term usually bandied about by people wearing lab suits and is connected with machines that learn. Basically this

should mean the game actually tries out new strategies and reacts to player actions. For example the AI might decide to lay ambushes, probe for weak spots, or create diversionary attacks to lure away key defences.

All this sounds as if Data Design might have built themselves up a massive project full of problems to be overcome. What was the motivation for taking all this on? "We wanted to set a milestone just for the sake of it". Fair enough!

CONQUEST EARTH COMBINES ARCADE THRILLS WITH THE DEPTH OF A STRATEGY GAME. IMAGINE A CROSS BETWEEN CANNON FODDER AND COMMAND AND CONQUER.

Eamonn Barr explains. "We started work on this project way before C&C came out and we knew the style we wanted. *Conquest Earth* mixes up genres to get fast, fluid and exciting gameplay. Strategy players will be able

(BELOW RIGHT 1 - 4) HORRIBLE LIVE-ACTION SPECIAL EFFECTS ARE LIBERALLY SPRINKLED THROUGHOUT THE GAME. EVEN WHEN THESE ITEMS ARE SEEN SAT LIFELESS ON A DESK IN THE STUDIO THEY STILL LOOK DISGUSTING.



At Data Design's West Midland studios one floor has been set aside for filming special effects. An office at the back is stuffed full of heads with half the skull revealed, animatronic arms, gallon bottles of blood and tubs of slime. Medical photographs of innards hang on the walls. The artist who works there was poached from a local hospital where he was building prosthetic limbs. Now he spends his time creating the live-action cut sequences for *Conquest Earth* that should make it stand out from the crowd.



Actua Soccer 2

1 It is foretold. Sooner or later a football game that lives up to its promises will arrive. Granted there's been one good effort recently in the form of Konami's *ISS Pro* which moved the genre on a few paces, but still some playability managed to get lost between preview and review stages. Perhaps the ambitious *Actua Soccer 2* project from Gremlin will produce the kickabout we know the PlayStation is capable of.

EASY LIFE

Before work began on a sequel, programmers sat down with the original *Actua Soccer* code and ruthlessly probed for weak spots. Many hours were spent playing other football games like *Sensible Soccer*, *Kick Off*, and *ISS Pro*, as well as arcaders *Euro '96* and *Virtua Striker*. It was decided that where *Actua Soccer* fell down was on over-emphasis of simulation. Virtually every facet of football had been calculated, resulting in a slower game that stuttered along. For instance, when a forward met a cross with his head the engine would work out the point of contact exactly to

determine the direction and strength of header.

As a result *Actua Soccer 2* will be much faster moving, with natural and unfussy gameplay. Since motion-captures can make graphics jerky as characters move from one set sequence to another, this time around there will be less emphasis on motion-capturing every possible move as Gremlin instead aims for instant and fluid action.

That's not to say the technique's been binned altogether. It's still being used and players already look realistic even from a distant camera position. Most of the original captures will be there, but there's a new set

for certain player movements and another 70 or so for new special moves, reactions to decisions and some for referees themselves.

Taking up from where *Actua Soccer Club Edition* left off, *Actua Soccer 2* will have a huge number of teams to mess about with. All Premier sides, hopefully with correctly named and up to date players, will obviously be included, but then programmers are also adding every Nationwide Division club. There'll also be divisions from several countries around the world to allow players to test international styles of play.

Usefully, an option will

allow all stats to be equalised, turning games into pure demonstrations of skill. At last Manchester City will be able to take on Manchester United on an even footing.

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

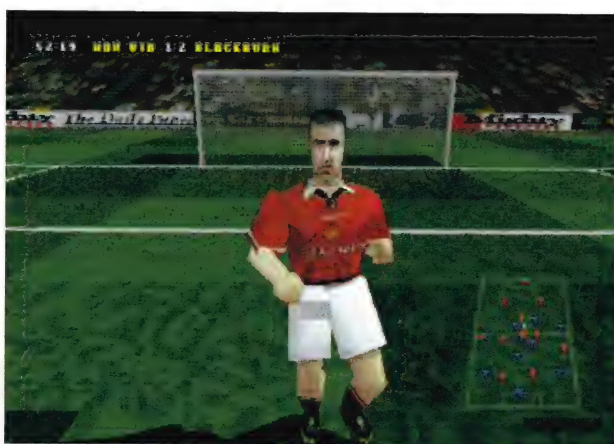
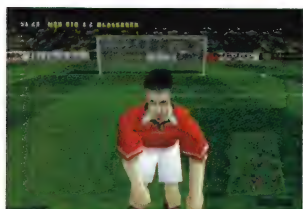
Beside being able to play your favourite side, no matter where they happen to fester in the professional divisions, *Actua Soccer 2* will also allow players to use one of 27 stadiums which have been painstakingly designed. Taken from lots of photos each is said to be detailed, realistic and recognisable. Matches can be played at



(BELOW)
WEATHER
CONDITIONS
SUCH AS MIST
ARE BEING
ADDED TO
ACTUA
SOCCER 2.

Release : OCTOBER
Company : GREMLIN
Price : £44.95
Players : 1-4
Genre : SPORTS SIM





ACTUA
SOCCER AND
ACTUA
SOCCER 2 ARE
WORLDS APART
IN TERMS OF
GRAPHICS AND
PLAYABILITY.

these grounds during day times or evenings, with floodlights throwing shadows, and snowy, foggy, rainy or windy conditions making the player's life hell. These settings can be toggled on or off in arcade mode and in simulation mode weather effects will come into play at the correct times of the season. Several difficulty levels will also be catered for, from professional down to pub league competence. On easiest players will never lose control and can also turn to face goal and get shots in the right general direction when trying to score.

Gremlin's programmers are paying attention to detail with touches such as fully working video screens, skid-marks on pitches which remain for the length of a match, players who pull their socks up or make a fuss when booked, statistics that pop up while waiting for the ball to be repositioned, and netting that bellows out realistically when a goal is scored.

Making purely cosmetic alterations to the original wouldn't have allowed Gremlin to fulfil its designs for *Actua Soccer 2*, though. A totally new engine had to be developed. Now, twice as many polygons can be displayed, which in the worse case means 3,000 on screen at once. Normal frame rate is between 28 and 30 per second on both NTSC and PAL machines, or if an overhead view is being used between 45 and 50 frames shoot past every second.

When PlayStation Plus visited Gremlin's Sheffield studios recently chips, first time touches and volleys, a selection of passes, including the old one-two, and long balls which bounce ahead of players had all been programmed and *Actua Soccer* was looking a pretty tasty prospect. Through-balls are also likely to make an appearance, as will loads of special moves which remain undecided so - as D:Ream would say - things can only get better...

VIEWPOINTS

Like many games in development stage *Actua Soccer 2* currently uses a totally free roaming camera, which allows play to be viewed at any angle from within the parameters of the game. However, when the finished product hits shelves this autumn there will be four or five preset angles to choose from, including an overhead (*Sensible Soccer*) view. Although free cams might be initially a touch tricky to set up, it's a pity most games don't leave this option in to allow the public to choose for themselves which is the perfect viewing angle.



(LEFT)
POSITION
RADAR NOW
SPINS AROUND
AS CAMERA
DIRECTIONS
CHANGE. THIS
SOUNDS ODD
BUT ACTUALLY
THE SYSTEM
WORKS VERY
WELL.

RUNABOUT OFFERS LOADS OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEEDLESS CRASHES AND EXPLOSIONS. HERE WE'VE DELIBERATELY SUNK A BMW IN A SWIMMING POOL FOR YOUR VIEWING PLEASURE.



If we had a quid for every driving game we see we'd have, ooh, about a thousand quid by now.

And let's be honest here, there are only one or two that really step forward, look you square in the eye and

demand, 'play me.' Too few, considering the amount around. Good news though, because if *Runabout* turns out to be all it's cracked up to be it's going to be one of the few you'll really want to own.

Take bits of *Destruction Derby*, throw in a dollop

or two of *Twisted Metal World Tour*, add a stonking cool soundtrack, a bit of wry humour and you've got the basic ingredients for the *Runabout* recipe.

It's got a storyline of sorts, but that's not important. The main thing is this game looks like fun. The player must guide their vehicle - initially

a selection including a Vespa scooter and a Mini - through areas (Downtown, Seaside and Metro City to be precise), complete tasks and get the hell to the end of the course before time runs out. So, it's basically a race against time. But there's also stacks of other hazards to negotiate: Pedestrians to torment, barriers to bash through, bridges to jump, that sort of thing - and vehicles can get seriously knocked. Not only that but there's also tons of things to explore on each course, so the chances are players will spend a fair bit of time getting used to the environment and discovering its many secrets before taking up the time challenge.

Once the course has been completed the game gives out little pressies which include other vehicles ranging from remote controlled buggies to police cars and even a bus - all the better for crashing through shopping centres with.

There's fun by the bucket-load to be had here and if *Runabout* plays anywhere near as good as it sounds, well, let's just say it could be a birrova classic.

GOT ANY SURF COASTERS?

The people responsible for *Runabout's* totally cool soundtrack are The Surf Coasters ('Japan's most popular instrumental combo!' - it says here) who do a surf guitar thing which sounds like the Pulp Fiction soundtrack meets Goldie for a kind of drum 'n' bass surf jam-boree. Can't wait.

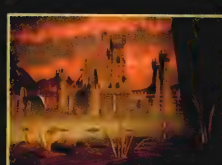


Release : IMPORT
Company : YANOMAN
Price : IMPORT
Players : 1
Genre : RACING

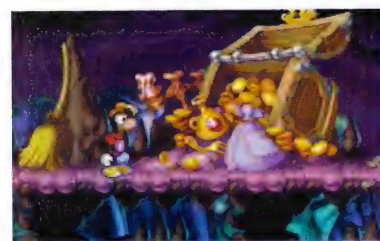
"BEST STRATEGY GAME OF ALL TIME"
NEXT GENERATION



PREPARE FOR WAR!



RAYMAN JUST TURNED PLATINUM!



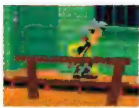
RAYMAN
Ubi Soft
ENTERTAINMENT

There's never been a platform game like it. When Rayman came out in 1995, it scored more than 90% from all the main magazines and raced to the top of the charts. Now Rayman's back on the PlayStation in a new budget priced Platinum version. Miss it and turn green.



IS IT A CAR-TOON OR IS IT A GAME? NEITHER REALLY, IT'S LUCKY LUKE, BASED ON A FRENCH CARTOON STRIP AND COMING TO A PLAYSTATION NEAR YOU VERY SOON INDEED.

Lucky Luke



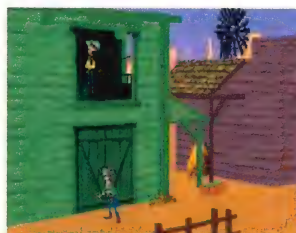
We're not big on European cartoon heroes over here, really.

Asterix and Tintin are pretty much the only two strips to have had any real impact in Blighty, but Ocean is confident a third name will be added to this very short list: *Lucky Luke*. Created by one of the original Asterix team, *Lucky Luke* is a cowboy whose misadventures have been ported to the PlayStation in the shape of a 3D arcade/adventure. As of yet, the scenario has yet to be formalised, but the game is

HOWDY

Lucky Luke is the most ambitious cartoon game yet, and is packed with visual trickery. Night gradually turns to day, casting shadows across the play area, and the artificial intelligence governing the other characters kicks in, as they go about their business - ie. going to bed or to the saloon!

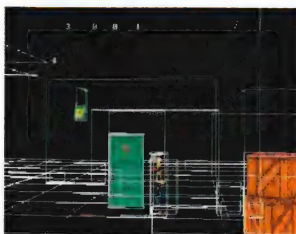
roughly 50% complete and already looking very impressive indeed. In order to convey the cartoon feel of the original, Luke and the assorted Wild West characters he meets on his travels all stand at least half a screen high, and are incredibly well animated. The backdrops are of a similarly high standard, and as Luke wanders from the dusty desert and moseys into town, panning cameras follow his every move. All the characters and backdrops benefit from Gouraud shading, and are 3D models which can be viewed from any angle. While the main core of the game involves explo-



ration and puzzle-solving, adrenalin junkies can pit themselves against a number of arcade interludes which the game throws up every now and then.

Lucky Luke is the first fruit of Ocean's recent partnership with French giants, Infogrames. The French team has experimented with cartoon characters before, with both Asterix and Tintin

games for the Amiga and Super NES. *Lucky Luke*, however, is their most ambitious game yet. Every aspect of the game can be interacted with, and as Luke talks to characters and trades objects, we are promised a non-linear plot which changes depending on the outcome of certain in-game situations.



Release : NOVEMBER
Company : OCEAN
Price : TBA
Players : 1
Genre : ADVENTURE



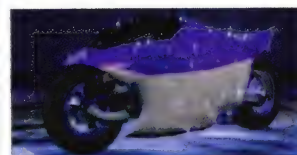
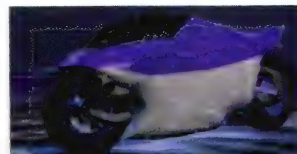
Crime Killer

it usually takes a fair sprinkling of imagination to get really excited about games in early stages of development. Unfinished graphics and only a hint of what could be considered gameplay can often mask a top-notch game in the making. Not so with *Crime Killer*. Although unlikely to hit shelves until January, Interplay's new shooting-come-racing game already looks a riot.

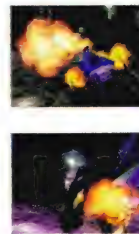
Set oh-so-surprisingly in a distant future, *Crime Killer* casts the player as a cop patrolling a Blade Runner-style city. Gangs of organised criminals are running amok and it's this policeman's job

to contain the situation through a series of vehicle-based missions. Three modes of killer transport – all bristling with firepower – will be available; a motorcycle, a patrol car and a wing (aircraft). Each handles in completely different ways, with individual strengths, weaknesses and separate sets of deadly weapons.

Real-time 3D environments



WITH POLICE PLANES, BIKES AND CARS AT YOUR DISPOSAL TACKLE AN ORGANISED CRIME WAVE.



IT'S EARLY DAYS STILL FOR CRIME KILLER BUT THE GAME IS ALREADY VERY FAST AND VEHICLES HANDLE SWEETLY. WATCH OUT FOR FULL UPDATES SHORTLY.

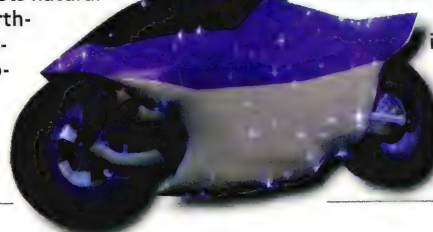


are designed to represent sectors of a city with urban characteristics such as industrial wastelands and ghettos. Roads are therefore set across all kinds of terrain which often require trick and stunt driving. Chases are made to feel more realistic thanks to an in-car camera that tilts and jolts as vehicles pull Gs, crunch into objects or get hit by huge explosions. Why, it even boasts natural disasters like earthquakes and volcanoes to make proceedings even more tense.

Gameplay will mix aspects of

shooting and racing genres thanks to the addition of a rival cop who takes up the same missions and doesn't intend to let anyone stand in the way of his promotion. While hunting down criminals it will be essential to watch your back for this colleague, and as even civilians are armed there should be no time to relax.

Running at 60 frames per second for NTSC and 50 for PAL, *Crime Killer* is already noticeably very fast and smooth, with vehicle handling especially pleasing.



Release : JANUARY
Company : INTERPLAY
Price : £44.95
Players : 1
Genre : RACING

PORSCHE

Challenge™

"9/10"

PlayStation Power

PORSCHE AND PLAYSTATION JOIN FORCES TO BRING YOU
THE MOST REALISTIC DRIVING GAME OF ALL TIME.

SONY



TM
COMPUTER
ENTERTAINMENT



DO NOT
UNDERESTIMATE
THE POWER

Lethal Enforcers

back in the dim and distant mists of time before the top cop-killing likes of *Time Crisis* and *Virtua Cop* there was *Lethal Enforcers*. Konami's first person shoot 'em up may have had the most rubbish gun ever mounted on its coin-op cabinet, but it was still a classic of sorts and guess what? That old coin-op classic is about to make its debut appearance on the PlayStation.

Yup, *Lethal Enforcers* aims to give the player all the thrills of offing every perp in eyeshot without any of the obvious drawbacks - like death. What's more, since the PlayStation release combines *Lethal Enforcers I* and *II* the slaughter and destruction can either take place in a kind of contemporary setting (in the first game) or in a Wild West environment (for the second).

Release : TBA

Company : KONAMI

Price : £TBA

Players : 1

Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP

THE LETHAL ENFORCERS WORLD IS EITHER THE WILD WEST OR A BRUTAL AND CRIME-PLAGUED URBAN LANDSCAPE.



Konami reckon the game's an exact conversion of the coin-op. This time though, you don't have to put up with the crappy gun since it's going to be compatible with all lightguns currently available. The rest stays the same. Players must battle their way



EACH GAME HAS TONS OF BOSSES TO BEAT, INCLUDING ONE WHO FIRES OFF CANNONBALLS. THE NERVE OF THE FELLOW.

through six stages, encountering the likes of armoured cars, hijacked airplanes and flaming covered wagons along the way. The PlayStation version also boasts difficulty settings and an option to turn blood on or off for the faint of heart.

Hard Boiled

in the near future taxmen will be replaced by killer androids who wipe out misbehaving members of the public, then go home and relax with their killer android wives. As if Her Majesty's servants weren't scary enough already! This strange vision is presented by *Hard Boiled*, a part-shooting, part-driving game from Electronic Arts which has kept pretty quiet up until now.

Set in a Blade Runneresque world, the player must use a deadly flying car to take on the director of a home appliances conglomerate. Movement through the 3D world is perpetual, although it is possible to use short bursts of extra speed. Over five missions the idea is to

eliminate trucks, bulldozers, cranes, helicopters, robots and a couple of strange bosses. Tracks include several branches, some will be short cuts packed with enemies, others will contain more power ups, which should lend a little more variety to the gameplay.

Hard Boiled claims to have awesome special and avionic FX with zooms and real-time rotations, an extensive selec-



DRIVE ALONG TUNNELS AND ROADS AND SHOOT LOTS OF BADDIES.

tion of sprites and transparencies and spectacular opening and closing cinematic sequences. See how it compares with *Tunnel B1* in next month's review.

HARD BOILED IS BASED ON A GRAPHIC NOVEL BY FRANK MILLER, WHO WROTE ROBOCOP 2. STRANGELY ENOUGH THE COMIC BOOK DID NOT INCLUDE ANY FLYING CARS.



Release : AUGUST

Company : ELECTRONIC ARTS

Price : £44.99

Players : 1

Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP

Motor Mash

top-down racing will soon be taken into a cartoon dimension thanks to a Wacky Races inspired game from Eutechnyx called *Motor Mash*. Although the company is quite keen to play down references to other titles, this game looks and plays like a Hanna-Barbera version of *Micro Machines V3*, which is no bad thing.

Offerings such as these are best enjoyed in the company of mates, and *Motor Mash* allows up to four players to

MOTOR MASH IS PROBABLY BEST DESCRIBED AS WACKY RACES MEETS MICRO MACHINES.



COLOURFUL, COMICAL GRAPHICS ARE MIXED UP WITH HECTIC RACING IN MOTOR MASH. IN-CAR WEAPONS, SUCH AS A SHRINK RAY ARE ESPECIALLY SILLY.

race simultaneously either using a multi-tap or a system of pad-sharing, which will no doubt lead to the odd gentlemanly disagreement. Bags of levels have been included, set across diverse terrains such as the jungle, Atlantis, the Wild West and a world of nightmares. Although viewed from above graphics have been created entirely

using polygons and when the product was shown to PlayStation Plus 3D environments seemed solid, quirky and very colourful. An intelligent camera pans in and out of the action and changes angles for maximum visibility, but this also helps to show off the 3D worlds and further enhances the feeling of depth.

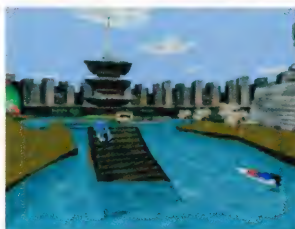
Release : SEPTEMBER
Company : OCEAN
Price : £44.99
Players : 1-4
Genre : RACING



Power Boat Racing

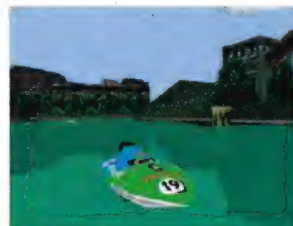
Using a complex physics engine to simulate realistic water effects, *Power Boat Racing* should provide an experience to leave players reaching for the sick bag. Massive jumps, unexpected obstacles and rivers that get rougher than the average theme park ride are just some of the features developer East Point Software is including.

A total of nine tracks (each with its own theme and character) are being designed. At Monaco, for example, piloting your craft across the bay it's possible to spot Formula 1 cars racing around the road track. On the banks of the New York circuit a high speed police chase is underway and after several laps the patrol-



man loses control of his car and crashes it into the water where it becomes an obstacle.

Wake and wash dynamics that



POWER BOAT RACING COULD BE ONE OF THE FIRST PLAYSTATION GAMES TO BE COMPLETED AHEAD OF ITS ORIGINAL SCHEDULE - SOMETHING UNHEARD OF IN THE INDUSTRY.

throw boats into the air, weather effects such as dense fog, secret routes and courses and separate classes of boats travelling at speeds of up to 200 mph complete the picture. At this stage of development the most impressive feature seems to be interaction between craft and water. Bobbing up and down on waves feels very realistic, and boats even dip below the surface after heavy landings, revealing a view of objects on the river bed.

Release : NOVEMBER
Company : INTERPLAY
Price : £44.95
Players : 1-2
Genre : RACING



Syndicate Wars ^{Guide}

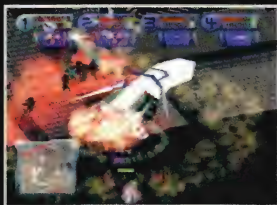


It's tough on the streets in **Syndicate Wars**, Bullfrog's top action strategy game, but it'll be even tougher without help. In the first instalment of our **two-part guide** we've got the **first five missions** for each side, as well as the weapons you'll find and some **battle tips**. So it's time to draw your minigun, gather your agents and paint the town (blood) red.

GENERAL TIPS AND STRATEGIES

First off, make sure you read the mission briefing carefully. This will allow you to be prepared for the battle ahead and select the right equipment. It's incredibly irritating having to persuade someone and then discovering you haven't got a persuadertron, or spending a packet on weaponry which isn't needed when you could have spent the money on enhancing your agents. So when you read the text, try to decide which weapons you need to take. Assassination missions may require the use of a long range rifle. Missions where you have to storm an enemy base should tell you a launcher or a flamer would be an asset. Equipping your agents is all well and good, but they will be defenceless without good body armour. Always buy your agents the best mods so they can survive longer. Chest mods are the most important since they protect an agent from enemy

fire, but leg enhancements are also an advantage to allow the agent to run much faster. Be careful with your money and don't spend it on weapons you won't need. Not all your agents will require a persuadertron as they can be expensive. Try and pick up as many weapons as you can find on a level and sell them when you finish. If you pick up expensive items then you can get a good profit from them. Also, remember to rob the banks on the levels. The banks are the large buildings with dollar sign banners hanging from the front. If you destroy these buildings, then you may find money scattered around the blast area. It's a good idea to use explosive mines on these buildings so that you can run away from the exploding building in time. To guarantee the destruction of the bank, lay the mine inside the building. Use one agent for the job to minimise casualties.



THE PERSUADERS



KEEP 'EM PEELED

When persuading a target, or killing a lone character, look at the surroundings to see if you can spot any possible ambushes. Lots of people you have to persuade will have guards hidden on the landscape who reveal themselves once you have control over that person. Also, you could try persuading with one agent and leave them at a safe spot on the map. Then clean up the rest of the level with your remaining agents and leave a path to take the newly-persuaded person through..

ONE OF US...

Persuading an enemy Syndicate agent is another matter. Sometimes, you'll have to persuade a number of civilians before more important characters.

CIVILIANS

To persuade any of the civilians – men or women – in the game you don't need to have people already persuaded. They are worth just one point on the persuaded count.

UNGUIDED

The Unguided punks require you to have ten persuaded points before they can be taken. They give you two persuaded points.

COPS

The Police are a separate entity to the Syndicates and require six persuaded points to gain control. They give you two in return.

GOVERNMENT AGENTS

Government agents are a bit like like sub-agents. They need 15 persuaded points to come over to your side and give you a whole three back.

ENEMY AGENTS

Enemy Agents are very resilient indeed and need you to have 20 persuaded points before they will submit to your side. In return they will give you five useful points.

ZEALOTS/THE NINE

You cannot persuade the Zealots or a member of The Nine unless you have a persuadertron II, an enhanced persuadertron. They then require twenty persuaded points and give you five points back.

SPIDER DRONES

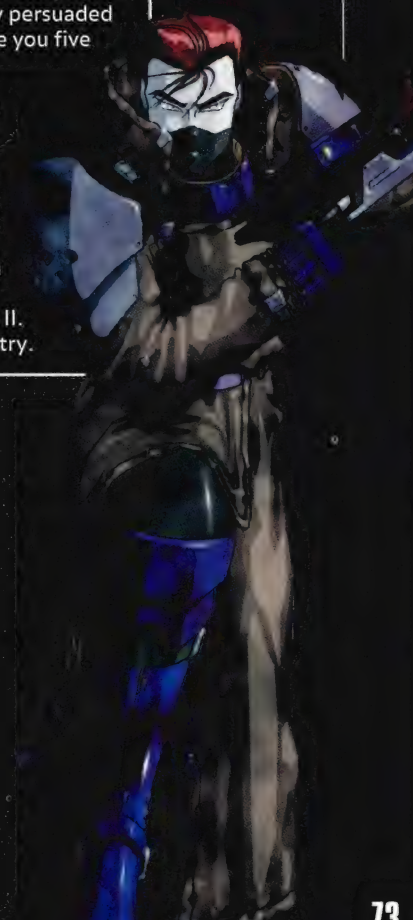
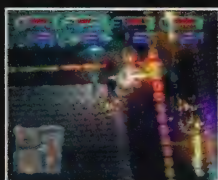
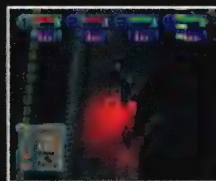
You can't persuade the Zealot Spider Drones which may accost you, even with the Persuadertron II. So don't even try.

AMBUSH!

For ambush tactics, flamers are one of the best weapons. If you have a large group of enemies who may be troublesome if you attack them with rockets, then send one agent to intercept them. He will catch their attention and lead them past the edge of a building. As the enemies run past the building, your agents, lying in wait with flamers at the ready, can open fire and fry the lot.

CAR WARS

Some vehicles can be very hard and powerful if you're caught unawares and the flying ones can travel anywhere on the landscape. Good weapons to use against ground vehicles are the ion mines. You can be far away when they go off. Lay them on the road and you will be guaranteed to hit the car. The plasma lance is also a good weapon to use against vehicles, when you get it.



LEVEL GUIDE

These level guides will take you through the entire level step by step. When the guide refers to points of the compass, look at your scanner in the corner of the screen. There is a line on the scanner that always points north. Use this to find your direction.

EUROCORP MISSIONS

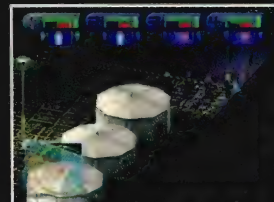
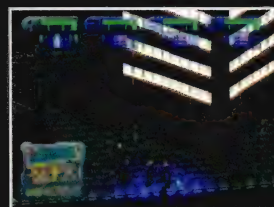
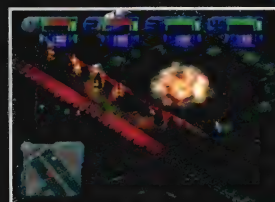
MISSION 1 - LONDON

On this first level, you start off in a Eurocorp compound. There are riots in progress outside so make your way to the entrance of the compound. From your scanner, you should be able to see that there are some unguided citizens gunning down innocent civilians. Head west and you will see the unguided. Just kill them and return to base.



MISSION 2 - DETROIT

Starting in the station at the south east of the map, you need to make your way west. You may encounter some resistance, so destroy any aggressors. Head to the drive-in cinema where there are some unguided waiting in a car. Kill them and steal the car. Drive out of the cinema and then directly east into the base. There are some guards patrolling the area so leave your car near the entrance. Walk east and kill the guards. At the top of the base you will find some Zealots. Shoot them, but be careful of their bodies, there may be some KO Gas around. Check all around the base and then make your way outside again. Your scanner will be informing you of other targets to eliminate. Follow these and take them out. Then return to the evacuation point.



MISSION 3 - HONG KONG

You start in the station at the north-western corner of the map. The base you have to reach is on an island and inaccessible to everything except cars. Thankfully there's a car in the car park opposite the station which you can take. Look around the map and you will see enemy agents guarding buildings. You can persuade these with a persuadertron, but you will need to persuade a lot of civilians first, at least twenty. You can find a loads around the level and by the

offices opposite the station. To the south-east of the map is a Zealot church. There is a lot of activity here, so ignore it unless you are sure you can win any battles. Persuade any civilians you need and then steal the car, drive it into the base and either shoot or persuade the guards inside. They may destroy the car if you leave this too long. Get out of the car and persuade the technicians. Leave the compound using the car and make your way back to the station.

MISSION 4 - MATOCHKIN SHAR

You start at the station at the western end of the map. The scientists you need to persuade are in two compounds to the north and south of the station. First find an empty vehicle. These are in the elevated car park in the centre of the map. To get to the car park, you must walk up to the east of the map and turn south. Then you have to follow the road and turn west again up to the raised car park. There will be punks in the car park firing at the cars so kill them all. Watch out for any roving police vehicles.

Once you have a car, take it to the larger of the two compounds, the one to the north of the map. Take the car in and fire at the enemy agents guarding it. Kill them quickly before your car is destroyed. The scientists

can be seen on your scanner, so make your way to them and persuade them. To the eastern end of the compound are two hover cars you can use to persuade the remaining scientists in the other base and kill any resistance. Make your way to the evacuation point to complete the mission. On this level, there is a Zealot base on the north-western side of the river. If you search this base, you will find a hard skin mod for your agents to use.



Small tips

SPIDER ULTIMATE PASSWORD

Enter this password to access all levels.

Y7KB3 YIWI 6QF3Q S7QC1

ALIEN TRILOGY CHEAT MENU

On the options screen, enter this code:

"1GOTP1NK8C1DBOOT-SON": (I got pink acid boots on).

Go back to the main menu, and select CHEATS. Then you can select levels, weapons and even health.

CRUSADER: NO REMORSE LEVEL PASSWORDS

Level 2: FWQP

Level 3: PLRQ

Level 4: SZNF

Level 5: TD5S

Level 6: J1BT

Level 7: K2CV

Level 8: N3DW

Level 9: 4FX

Level 10: X5GZ

Level 11: C6HO

Level 12: D7J1

Level 13: F8K2

Level 14: FGL3

Level 15: JFM4

INDEPENDENCE DAY LEVEL PASSWORDS

DBJHJ - Washington

GBDHP - New York

NBDHG - Paris

LB DG6 - Moscow

RBDHY - Tokyo

SOUL EDGE CHANGE THE COLOUR OF SOPHITIA'S PANTS!

Strange but true! When playing as Sophitia, hold down A, B, K or any combination of them while the next level is loading up in order to change the colour of her knickers on the new stage. It doesn't work for Sophitia! or Sophitia!! though.

CHOOSE THE WINNING POSE

By holding either A, B, K or Guard when a match has been won, you'll activate a particular winning pose for your character.

CONTROL THE REPLAY CAMERA

During the replay, the camera viewpoint can be controlled with the D-pad, while pressing A and B will zoom in and out.

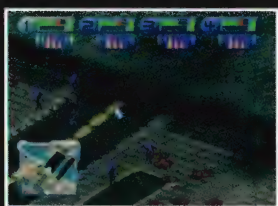
NEW TAKI MOVE!

Unbelievably, we've found another move for Taki! To perform her Spinning Axe Kick, just turn her back to the opponent and press B+K.

MISSION 5 - SINGAPORE

You are ordered to raid the bank of a breakaway syndicate. You start in the station at the south-east of the floating island. The bank, to the north of your starting point is heavily guarded and the moment you try to raid the site the syndicate will move the trucks and you will fail. If you destroy the trucks, you will also fail the mission so the only way to steal the bullion is to take out all the guards. To do this, you will need long range rifles, miniguns, the flamer and possibly razor wire. The first method is to lay the razor wire over the road, avoiding the passing cars and then attract the atten-

tion of the guards by killing one with a long range rifle. Then run away and lead them into the razor wire. While they are stuck trying to get through the wire, you can kill them with your miniguns. This can be a long-winded way of doing it so you can always just wade in brandishing flamers. Then you can go on to the site of the bank and take out any stray guards. Watch out for any guards who are running to get into the trucks. Take them out first otherwise you'll fail the level. Once you have done this, steal the trucks and make your way to the rendezvous point to the south west of the map.



CHURCH OF THE NEW EPOCH MISSIONS

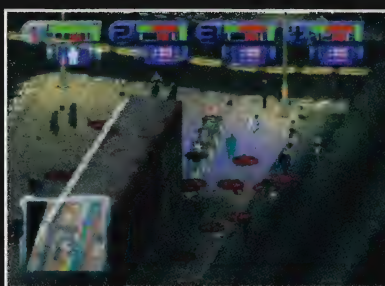
MISSION 1 - DETROIT

You start off in the station and your target is in the Syndicate base in the east. Go directly west and you will come to an empty police vehicle. Kill any police, get into it, then drive into the base. There will be some Syndicate agents patrolling the perimeter so kill them straight away. Then get out of the car and make your way east to the top of the base. Kill any guards and enter the bunker indicated on your scanner. You will then install the virus. Go back to the police vehicle and drive to the station. Exit the car and go into the station to evacuate.



MISSION 2 - PHOENIX

Go north where there are a few punks. One has a bomb, so grab it quick when you kill them. Go south and then east to where the hostages are. Kill the unguided, then get to the base. There's a bank to the east of the base. This will explode, so there will be loads of cash to pick up.



MISSION 3 - SANTIAGO

Your mission is to persuade a Syndicate agent to join the Zealot cause. Santiago is a city split into two halves: The island in the middle and the rest of the city surrounding it. To reach the central island, you will need to find a flying vehicle somewhere around the perimeter. You start in the Zealot compound on the south-east edge of the map. You will need to persuade at least twenty civilians before you can persuade your target, so run around and get as many as possible, and kill any resistance. Once you have twenty or so people, find the flying vehicle and go to the central island. If you have time, you can arm up your persuaded followers first by taking them to the northern side of the map to pick up all the weapons scattered about there. Then, find your target using your scanners. The area will be very heavily guarded so keep a look out. When you persuade the syndicate agent, there is a flying vehicle to the east of the island which you can get in to escape to the evacuation area.

MISSION 4 - JOHANNESBURG

From the north-west corner, steal the yellow car and go to the north-eastern vaults. Kill the guards then drive off. A convoy shows. Drive back and kill everyone. Bag the agent who leaves the armoured car, get the gold, then escape.

**MISSION 5 - HONG KONG**

Take two high explosives. Start in the station in the north-west. Go east, then south to the church bridge. Leave an agent to drop an explosive halfway. Destroy the bridge next to it and kill everyone. Go south and kill the foe with rifles and miniguns. Kill everything that comes your way.

**WEAPONS**

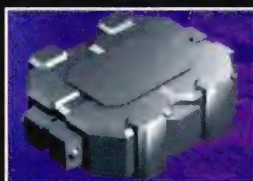
There's an arsenal of weapons available, but unless they're used properly you'll be a smear on the pavement. Here's a guide to the weapons in the first five missions.

**UZI**

The standard weapon for Syndicate agents, this is an inexpensive, yet crap gun which should be discarded in favour of the minigun.

**MINIGUN**

This is more like it. Powerful, and compared to other weapons, quite cheap, this is the best all-round weapon for the early missions.

**HIGH EXPLOSIVE**

With a large burst radius and loads of power this is basic but effective. Place in the mission zone and withdraw your agents to safety.

**PERSUADERTRON**

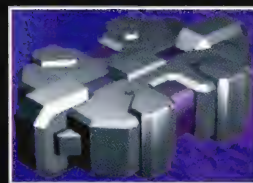
It's obvious what this does, but it has uses other than simply allowing agents to kidnap people. A zombie army can be created to create a human shield.

**KNOCKOUT GAS**

This hand grenade contains an asphyxiating nerve agent. The detonation cloud knocks out everybody in the area so use to escape from (or kill) your enemies.

**DISRUPTER**

This device has the effect of un-persuading people. It would prove most effective against a Persuadertron user, reverting all the persuaded followers to their previous state.

**ION MINE**

This mine is proximity triggered, and affects any vehicle or cyborg caught in its field of effect. It's powerful electro-magnetic pulse will disable or destroy cyborgs and vehicles.

**RAZOR WIRE**

Its use prevents civilian access to secure areas and presents an obstacle for cybernetics. It can be lethal or slows down enough for killing the enemy as they try to escape the wire.

**PSYCHO GAS**

Anyone caught in its gas cloud becomes psychotic. This involves armed targets going crazy and shooting anything within range, so once you've dropped one of these, get far far away.

**FLAMER**

Flaming an enemy immediately causes damage. Firing a weapon at the enemy, you have to drain his shields before he dies and, during that time, he can be firing at you.

**LONG RANGE RIFLE**

This kills most enemies with a single shot, but almost useless in close quarters. Best used for picking off at a distance before moving in and finishing the job with short-range weapons.



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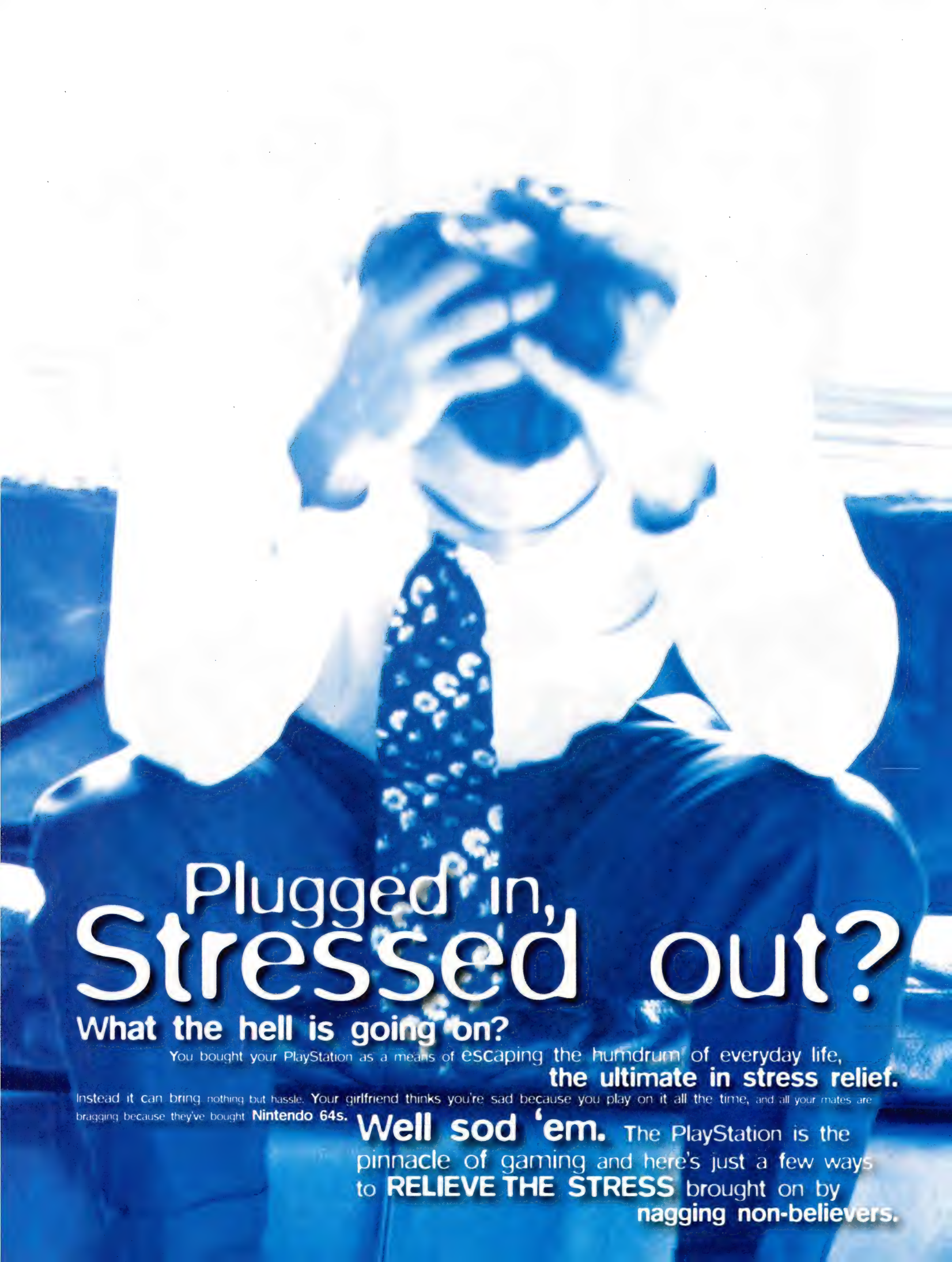
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Refresh Your Head



Plugged in, Stressed out?

What the hell is going on?

You bought your PlayStation as a means of escaping the humdrum of everyday life,
the ultimate in stress relief.

Instead it can bring nothing but hassle. Your girlfriend thinks you're sad because you play on it all the time, and all your mates are bragging because they've bought **Nintendo 64s.**

Well sod 'em. The PlayStation is the
pinnacle of gaming and here's just a few ways
to **RELIEVE THE STRESS** brought on by
nagging non-believers.



Shed loads 'o' software

You want games? The PlayStation's got

flippin' stacks of 'em! There are 250 monster games to wade through, from hard-as-nails blasters to funky hip-hop romps and pukey platformers like *Crash Bandicoot*. Compared to rival consoles the PlayStation is literally drowning in games while the others are barely paddling in product. Ha!

Cheapo Price

For under 130 notes you get a fantastic arcade-quality games machine. Sony's chunk of grey isn't as expensive as the Nintendo 64 or Sega's Saturn pack and represents much better value. For less cash you get a top-notch console that's leading the way in the next generation market. What more do you want?

The Sony Music Connection

Because Sony Computer Entertainment is the sister company of Sony Music, many PlayStation games sport wicked dance tunes. Phat phunksters The Chemical Brothers and Prodigy have both contributed to games, while techno kings Apollo 440 are providing tracks for forthcoming titles.



It's Cool

Nintendo 64s are not cool. Neither are Saturns.

PlayStations, however, are cooler than Mr Freeze. And that's cold! The PlayStation has made video gaming cool, something no other machine has managed to achieve. The machine is a status symbol, an icon of credibility, and owning one will instantly boost your popularity. Chicks love it too.

The Club Scene

The PlayStation is so hip even the clubs have picked up on it. Club capital Ministry of Sound kick-started the trend with its PlayStation room, now big names in dance culture have followed suit. Check the latest games in Cream or the Hacienda – it's a damnsight cheaper than poncey bottled

beers or £2-a-bottle mineral water, and it's the perfect opportunity to impress the girls with Heihachi's 10-hit super combo.

Squaresoft

These champion coders defected from Nintendo to produce the best role-playing game in the world... ever!

The Japanese genius hasn't just got *Final Fantasy VII* to flaunt either, its software selection is overflowing with monster Role Playing Games and blinding fighting games like *Tobal 2* and *Bushido Blade*.

Parappa the Rapper

He's the hip-hop hero, the man with the master plan. Sony's lyrical master is the coolest kid on the block, stringing together rhymes in a rapping romp that's in a class of its own. And get this, you won't find this homeboy hanging out anywhere else.



Namco

These boys are as loyal as man's best friend and have remained faithful to the PlayStation since the dawn of next generation gaming. They're slick too, churning out one classic moment in video gaming history after another. First there was *Ridge Racer*, then *Tekken* and now *Time Crisis*. Don't be shy, sing along to show your appreciation: "We love you Namco, we do..."

Resident Evil

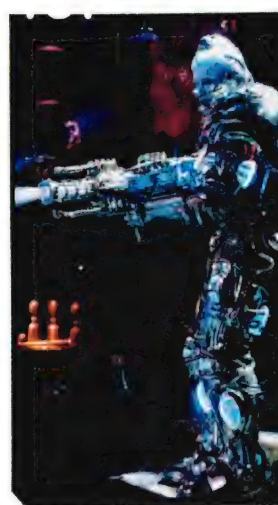
Capcom's horror story is exclusive to PlayStation at the moment. By the time the Saturn and Nintendo 64 is blessed with *Resident Evil*, we'll be feasting on rotting flesh in the super-sequel.

It's a Sony

Sony is synonymous with quality. You buy a Sony, you know you get good value for money. The PlayStation is no exception and like other Walkmans, TVs or video, it offers cutting edge technology at an



The **PlayStation** has made video gaming cool, something no other machine has managed to achieve.



KEY



BEER LOGO

Chill out with the thought that this'll get them Nintendo 64 owners really jealous.



CIGARETTE LOGO

This is the PlayStation Plus equivalent of a handjob – guaranteed to ease those gaming gripes.

Still stressed out? Try these other methods of relieving post-PlayStation tension:

1. Get laged out.
2. Bliss out with aromatherapy oils.
3. Stick on tape of womb music.
4. Get a relaxing back massage
5. Have a quick one off the wrist.

Historically **video game consoles** have been nasty black lumps of tacky plastic. The Sony PlayStation isn't. It's cool grey, it's super-compact and its trendy angular design is more art deco than console tastelessness.

affordable price. Customer support is pretty good too, so if anything does go wrong, there's always someone on hand to help.



Tomb Raider 2

There's another chance to ogle at binary babe Lara Croft in her see-through vest and tiny shorts in the PlayStation-led *Tomb Raider 2*. Saturn owners won't get so much as a sniff of Lara's, er... assets, and so won't be able to sample the delights of her costume changes during the game. A skin-tight wetsuit will feature and the inclusion of leather bondage gear has yet to be ruled out.

G-Con 45

Namco's meaty lightgun comes straight from the arcades and into the home. It doesn't have the recoil of the real thing but this baby sure is accurate – it double-scans the screen, allowing the homicidal player to pick off perps at a 100 yards



Nifty adverts

Even the PlayStation's adverts are cool. Check the *Tekken 2* and *Crash Bandicoot* magazine ads – they may be weird but heck, they're smart. The television advertisements are even better, especially now geekish Dwight P Dibley has done a disappearing act.

Link-up option

We've all seen games with split-screen options but how many next generation consoles support link-up play? One, namely the PlayStation! Get a cable sorted, stick a couple of machines together and blow the crap out of each other in *Deathmatch Doom*, or line up against your mates for the ultimate adrenalin rush in *WipeOut 2097* – there's nothing better.



Post-pub Gaming

This is a sure-fire recipe for much laughs. Get rat-arsed at your local, drag a handful of mates back to your gaff and stick *Tekken 2* in the PlayStation. Roll around on floor for two hours while trying to pull off Law's Flaming Kick, then dash to the bog and throw up. Make sure the cupboards are stocked up with crisps and nibbles beforehand, and take extra care by covering the PlayStation in cling film – carrot chunks are not good for your machine.

Developer support

No other machine can boast the support given to the PlayStation by its developers. This baby isn't just backed by Sony itself, there are over a 100 teams from around the world working on games for the PlayStation.

Net Yaroze

Like the humble 8bit home computers before it, Net Yaroze promotes home programming with its commercially available development kit. With the trendy black PlayStation in your grubby mitts, coding the next *Resident Evil* isn't that ridiculous after all. Programming skills must be great though, with a pretty hefty bank balance to match, otherwise it's a no go, daddy-o.

PlayStation Pad

Forget other tacky plastic pads of joy, Sony's official controller still ranks up there with the best of 'em. Whether you're kicking the shit out of some poor sap or flooring a super-fast sportster, this beast is perfect for it all. Keep an eye for the forthcoming analogue pad too – it's a doozy.



Station Stunna

Historically consoles have been nasty black lumps of plastic. The PlayStation isn't. It's grey, it's compact and its angular design is more akin to art deco than console tastelessness. It doubles as a rather attractive mantelpiece ornament as well as a chic games machine, then.



CD=Cartridge Disaster

Who needs cartridges when you've got CDs? CDs are a helluva lot cheaper, they can store more data and the boxes fit neatly alongside your music collection. The PlayStation's discs are black too, which makes them even more cool...

Light sourcing

Take a look at any PlayStation game and you'll see some pretty cool effects used for explosions, lighting rooms or giving the illusion of transparent water. This is all thanks to the PlayStation's smart light sourcing. It makes all the difference on games like *Doom*, *Tomb Raider* and even *Die Hard Trilogy*, but is used particularly well in *WipEout 2097* – the Saturn version looks naff in comparison!

Variety of software

We all know there's stacks of games available for the PlayStation, but there is a huge variety too. Anyone will be able to find a game suited to their tastes, whether its the oddball ambience of *Aquanaut's Holiday* or the straightforward brawling in *Street Fighter Alpha*, Sony's machine has more choice than a box of Quality Street.



One Million units sold

A UK user base in excess of one million doesn't just mean a slap on the back for Sony, it

also leads to good things for you, the gamer. The growth of the machine means more companies are investing in the PlayStation, so the number of games available will steadily increase. Because there are so many PlayStation owners video gaming is becoming more sociable, with Sony leading the attack to wipe out anorak gamers. Now surely that's a good thing?

PlayStation clothing

PlayStation isn't just a games machine, it's a way of life. Sony is extending its brand not just with new games but also a range of clothing that's due in the shops soon.

Merchandise will include t-shirts, sweatshirts, jogging bottoms and combat trousers, as well as snowboards and the already popular record bags. Get 'em checked out.

Original Games

The PlayStation isn't just a platform for arcade conversions. It's first with the best games like *WipEout 2097*, *Resident Evil* and *Doom*, and boasts games that will never appear on other games machines. Take *Rage Racer* for example, or *Final Fantasy VII*, or *Parappa the Rapper*... need we say more?

It's a sexual thang

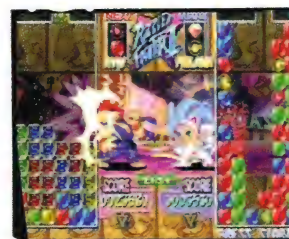
Video gaming can be sexual because PlayStation is appealing to chicks. It's perfect for breaking the ice in awkward situations on a first date (providing you bring her back to your place, obviously) and there's nothing quite like a game of post-coital *Puzzle Fighter*.

Packing peripherals

The PlayStation has got more support than a WonderBra, backed not only by loads of games but also by tons of peripherals. Take your pick from Joypads, arcade sticks, a mouse, multi-taps, analogue sticks, extension leads, light-guns, memory cards, steering wheels, AV cables, disc wipes... the list just goes on and on.



Video gaming is becoming more sociable, with Sony leading the attack to wipe out anorak gamers.



Boyzone, Blur and Wu-Tang Clan all use the Sony PlayStation as means of escaping from the humdrum of everyday life. Strange, most rock stars prefer class-A drugs and groupies.

Saturn owners won't get so much as a sniff of Lara Croft's assets.

PlayStation: The Ride
PlayStation excitement isn't limited to your home or some backroom in a club. Sony's empire has stretched to Blackpool, where the new PlayStation ride has opened. Aptly called PlayStation: The Ride, hapless victims are strapped inside chairs before being catapulted 200 feet in the air at 80 mph, reaching a G-force of 4.5! Blimey!

Ruud Gullit

Countless celebrities are fully paid-up members of the PlayStation posse, with Ruud Gullit one of the latest additions. The dreadlocked cool geeza dabbles with his PlayStation in between managing FA Cup winners Chelsea, joining David James and Paul Ince as top soccer star gamers.

Platinum games

PlayStation games are slowly falling in price, while the cost of games on other platforms steadily increases, culminating in the monstrous £70 price tag for *Turok* on the Nintendo 64. Sony's own games now sell for the cheapo price of £35, while the ever-growing Platinum range retails for less than twenty notes.

It's a CD player

Because the PlayStation has to audio-out sockets it doubles as a proper CD player. Just hook it up to your stereo, stick in a music CD and whack up the volume. Connecting up to a stereo boosts the audio experience for games too. Play *Resident Evil* in the dark with the volume turned up and you'll fill your pants, guaranteed!

Slick 3D

If it's smart 3D you're after, the PlayStation is the place to look. Sony's hunk 'o grey can shift 3D objects at terrific speed, making the perfect platform for driving games,

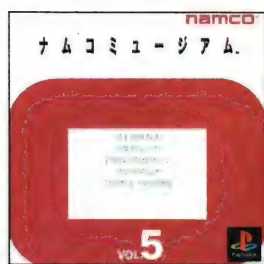
polygon beat 'em ups, 3D platform romps... anything in the next generation catalogue really.

Bargain Bundles

For £129 you can get a PlayStation, a joypad and the necessary leads to connect to your television. For a bit more you can also land yourself different games by getting one of the countless value bundles offered by high street stores. Check 'em out for attractive offers, or wait for the sales to get some really tasty deals.

Retro Gaming

The PlayStation is the pinnacle of video gaming, but is also geared toward the veteran gamer. Classic moments in software history are squeezed into classics compilations like the *Namco Museum* packs, while Williams and Atari games have both been given the retro treatment in the past few months.



Doom

Ever seen *Doom* on the Saturn? It's a bleedin' atrocity!

PlayStation *Doom* is altogether a much better game, boasting levels from both the original *Doom*, *Doom II* and *Ultimate Doom*. It's even got PlayStation unique stages, plus the super-smart Deathmatch mode which you won't find on any other next generation console.

Wu-Tang Clan

Wu-Tang Clan have just jumped on the PlayStation bandwagon. Rap's hottest act name-checked the Sony machine on its latest - and classic - album, *Wu-Tang Forever*, referring to 'playing the PlayStation in the playpen'. Or something. Another thumbs up from the celebs then.



Countless celebs are paid-up members of the PlayStation posse. Ruud Gullit and David James are both gamers





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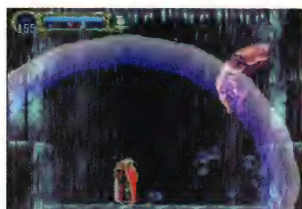
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X

THE GRAPHICS MAY BE 2D BUT DON'T LET THAT PUT YOU OFF. THERE'S GREAT SATISFACTION TO BE HAD MOVING ALUCARD AROUND THE MANY LEVELS - EACH PACKED WITH SPOOKY AND ATMOSPHERIC SURPRISES.

While most gaming genres seem to be very well represented on the PlayStation (driving and fighting games in particular), platform titles have been rare - and great ones even rarer. Last year we had *Pandemonium* and *Crash Bandicoot*, but these relied heavily on their 3D graphics in order to get the punters in. On the 2D scene though, no one has really made a mark. Now, with *Castlevania X*, Konami is here to prove not only can an incredible platform game be done on the PlayStation, but that it doesn't need polygons to make it an impressive one. Even though it's the first episode in the *Castlevania* series to appear on a 32-bit machine, it follows the plot of the previous games. These are based around the Belmonts, a family of heroes who have spent generations fighting the evil of Dracula.



Beginning at the final stage of the last game, the player must first control Richter Belmont to defeat Dracula. Several years later though, Richter goes missing just as *Castlevania*, Dracula's castle, reappears. The presence of this old evil awakens Dracula's son Alucard, a good vampire (assuming there are such things) who in the absence of a Belmont, must go after his father himself...

HE'D BETTER HAVE DEEP POCKETS

So, the, it's off to Castle Dracula to have it out with

dad and make the old boy wish he'd stayed in his coffin.

Alucard starts the game by entering the castle armed with his trusty sword and wearing his best armour. Unfortunately, he's soon stripped of his possessions by the grim reaper himself, Death (making a cameo appearance). Now Alucard has not only to get through the castle and defeat Dracula, but he must also find the weapons in order to do it. And this is the real beauty of the game, because the castle is absolutely gigantic, and filled with more items than any other platform game

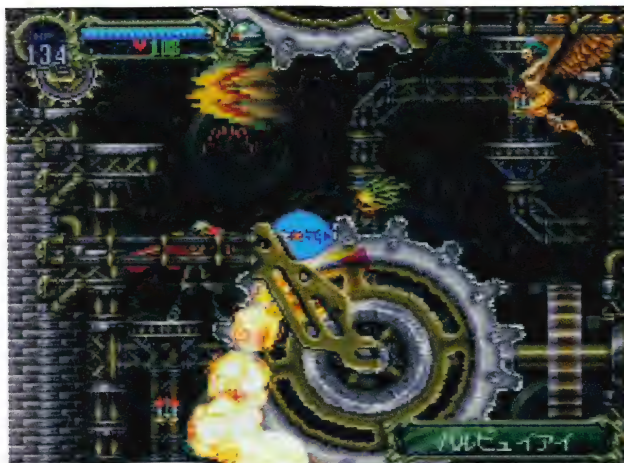


ever. Hell, there are adventure games which don't have as much stuff to pick up. There are over 100 objects to find including weapons, armour, magical artifacts, clothes and even jewellery - all of which can be used or worn by our hero. Once picked up, secondary weapons are powered by the hearts Alucard finds when he destroys candle flames and monsters. But it's the thirty magical items which are the most important, because picking these up gives Alucard special powers allowing him to explore the castle. For

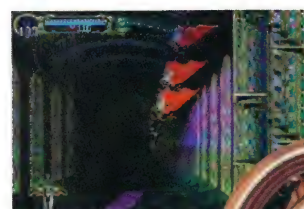
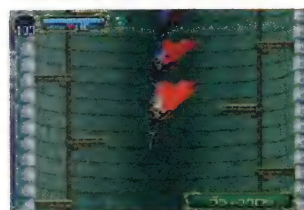


FORTUNATELY FOR HIM, ALUCARD HAS A FEW TRICKS OF HIS OWN UP HIS SLEEVE. HE HAS TO FIND THEM FIRST, MIND YOU, BUT WHEN HE DOES THEY CAN BE VERY EFFECTIVE AGAINST THE FOE.

Release : OUT NOW
Company : KONAMI
Price : IMPORT
Players : 1
Genre : PLATFORM



HAVE YOU WORKED OUT YET THAT DRACULA NAMED HIS SON BY GIVING HIM HIS OWN NAME BACKWARDS? FORTUNATELY FOR ALUCARD HIS DAD WASN'T CALLED REKNAW.



HOUSE OF TELL

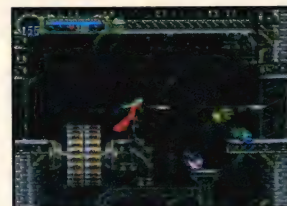
instance, by getting hold of a pendant giving Alucard the ability to double his jump height, he can reach previously inaccessible platforms, and thus visit new areas. Other things to be found let the vampire transform into a wolf, bat or cloud of mist, or summon creatures to help him, and much, much more.

This many items might seem like overkill, but the castle is such a deadly place they are more than necessary. It's a dwelling straight out of the Hammer House of Horror and populated with over 130 types of monster to battle. Once destroyed they don't

THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY OF GETTING AROUND DRACULA'S CASTLE AND PORTALS DOTTED AROUND ALLOW ALUCARD TO TELEPORT AROUND THE GAME AT WILL.

FEEL THE POWER OF MY MAGIC POCKET WATCH

As anyone familiar with the *Castlevania* series can tell you, the secondary weapons are among the most useful in the game. *Castlevania X* continues that tradition by offering some incredible armaments for our anaemic hero. Only one secondary weapon can be held at any time, so care must be taken when choosing which one to use, and all have their good and bad points. But all of them use up Alucard's supply of hearts, and so more must be found hidden in the candles and flames throughout the castle.



KNIFE

Fast they may be, but these daggers don't do huge amounts of damage. On the plus side though, they can destroy some of the enemies' missile weapons.

AXE

Continuing the Ghosts and Goblins theme, Alucard's axe is a slower but more powerful weapon which travels in an arc when thrown at the baddies.



RICOCCHET JEWEL

One of the most useful secondary weapons, this allows Alucard to fire off bouncing beams of light. In an enclosed area, this can decimate all enemies in seconds.

POCKET WATCH

Using this makes Enemies slow down or stop, giving Alucard plenty of time to escape. Or to hit the hell out of the defenceless suckers (heh heh).

go away either, because once Alucard re-enters the room the monsters will be there once more. This doesn't get as irritating as you might think, since if they remained dead the castle would get very empty and very dull. Anyway, killing tons of monsters is good for the vampire as he receives points allowing him to advance in experience and become more powerful. And powerful he'll have to be

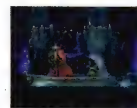
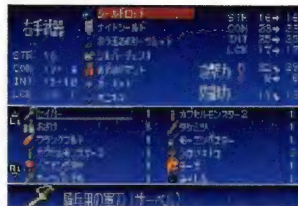
because while monsters start out as skeletons and zombies who are pitifully easy to beat, once the big boys come out things get very hard indeed. Huge knights with fire swords, flying heads which can cover Alucard in stone (which can only be escaped by rapidly hitting the Dpad) and minotaurs with dragon punches for starters. And then there's some of the strangest bosses you'll ever



THERE'S AROUND 100 THINGS TO PICK UP, ABOUT 130 TYPES OF MONSTERS TO KILL AND A MASSIVE CASTLE TO EXPLORE. BETTER KEEP NIGHTS FREE FOR A WHILE.



HERE'S A HANDFUL OF THE ENEMIES ALUCARD MUST FACE. CHECK OUT THAT FLYING SKULL. COOL.



Opinion This game is so addictive it could lead to starvation! *Castlevania X* is so hard to pull yourself away from that the joy pad might as well be superglued to your hand! 2D games never get much of a look in on the PlayStation, but Konami has managed to use it to its advantage by making a gigantic game with tons of rooms, monsters and items making *Castlevania X* an incredibly huge game to play. And one which is immensely playable to boot. Exploring the castle is hugely engrossing fun, and combined with the constant fighting it means getting bored is not an option. Disregard what the game looks like and give *Castlevania X* a try, it's one of the best (if not the best) platformers on the PlayStation and should be picked up right now.

DB



see: Living swords which rotate floating blades; a many headed beast who lives in the caves underneath the castle, and even an evil double of Alucard himself.

As if that wasn't bad enough, the castle doesn't make things any easier. It's so large that without the handy

map charting which locations have been visited you'd get lost in no time. Filled with difficult to reach platforms, collapsing floors, lifts, staircases, and even rivers

and a waterfall, exploring the castle will take a very long time.

Fortunately games can be saved in any of the many rooms dotted around the castle. Visiting them replenishes

Alucard's health, making up for the fact that extra health is almost impossible to find. Healing potions can be purchased from a merchant who lives in the castle, and to save having to traipse

all the way up to his shop all the time there are portals which, once found, allow Alucard to teleport around the castle and save on journey times. This means there's more time to explore new areas than revisiting old ones, and keeps the game fast moving and fun. And the depth is further increased once the castle has been completed - but you'll have to find that out yourself.

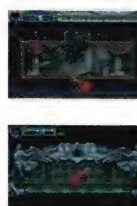
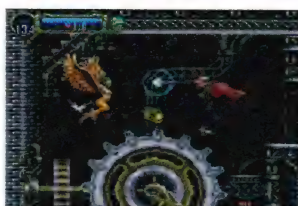
MAXIMUM DEPTH

The upshot of all this is that *Castlevania X* is one of the largest and most fantastic games yet seen on the

PlayStation. The graphics might only be 2D, but they do the job and do it well, and the music is some of the best in any PlayStation game yet,

with the CD used to its full potential to provide a great monster-bashing soundtrack. Huge longevity is never in doubt since this is a deep and enjoyable title that will keep gamers happy for weeks and weeks.

Secrets are around every corner, and with its mix of action and RPG elements, it shows great platform games can be made on the PlayStation, it just takes the right people to do them.



PSP RATING...

Graphics : 86
Animation : 85
Sound FX : 80
Music : 94
Lastability : 93
Playability : 90

91

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INFOGRAMES
TAKES A NEW
APPROACH TO
THE RACING
GENRE. V-
RALLY TENDS
TO COME
DOWN ON THE
SIMULATION
SIDE OF GAM-
ING.



Up until recently the French-produced V-Rally looked as if it might be a wasted opportunity. An excellent graphics engine - based on third generation programming techniques - and courses galore were combined with a car only professional rally drivers could keep under control. However, the game has since been fine-tuned over and over again and has apparently impressed the hell out of Sony. If the mix is now right the PlayStation might at last have an answer to *Sega Rally*. Let's see, shall we.

CHOICES, CHOICES
Based around the World Rally Championships, V-Rally gives players the chance to try out 11 cars modelled on specifications and data from all the

real teams. Two modes of play take in tracks throughout Indonesia, England, Spain, the French Alps and Corsica, Africa, New Zealand and Sweden. Licensing peculiarities mean courses are not exact replicas of the originals, but they do stick to the feel of each stage. Some of the races take place on country roads, others cut directly through the roughest hewn jungles, forests and deserts. Additionally, competition takes place at various times of day or night, and weather conditions such as fog, rain and snow can make driving an absolute nightmare.

Getting into this game is a slow process, especially if you're familiar with arcade-style driving games that tend to be rather more forgiving. Here, keeping to a racing line is essential because contact

with anything off the track, such as rocks or banks, sends the vehicle into time-wasting spins or flips. Verges, on the other hand, are less dangerous and clipping these doesn't have to be fatal, providing the accelerator is eased off at the right moment. In this way it's possible to cut into corners, brush through foliage obscuring the view and come out the other side on a perfect line. Tremendously satisfying.

Nevertheless, even keeping strictly to firm ground sometimes causes problems. Tracks tend to be very uneven and hitting the wrong lump sets the vehicle into a chain of events that quickly get out of hand. Caution is the key to success in general. Constant dabbling the accelerator, steering and braking is the only way to take the

lead (unless other drivers crash out on the first corner), but finding the right way to handle the controls takes time. It's easy to jerk the steering left and right too quickly and end up with the back end of your car sliding out of control.

A TEST OF SKILLS

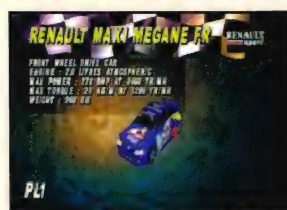
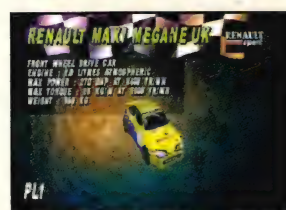
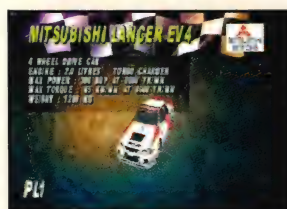
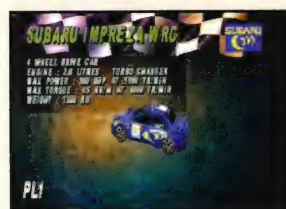
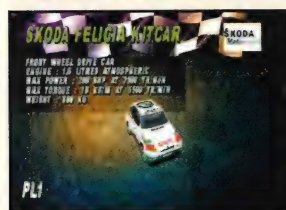
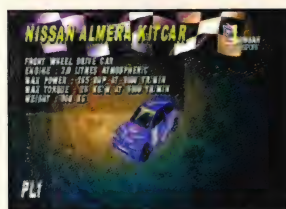
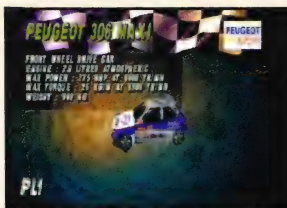
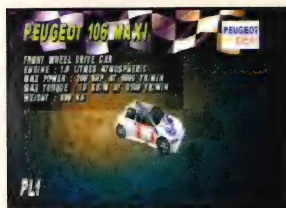
All this careful driving malarkey may make V-Rally sound like an overly fussy game offering limited playability, but nothing could be further from the truth. Just because driving games have tended to be handled in certain ways in the past, this doesn't mean there's just one right way to approach the genre. Programmer Infogrames has come up with a game needing effort and skill to get any kind of results and is quick to punish lapses



Release : OUT NOW
Company : OCEAN
Price : £44.99
Players : 1-4
Genre : RACING

TAKE YOUR PICK

Vehicle handling depends a great deal on whether a two or four-wheel drive machine is selected. Front-wheel-drive cars are much more stable as the engine naturally drags the vehicle around corners. Four-wheel-drive cars tend to skip all over the place but have massive power output and, with plenty of practice, power slides are more controllable.



in concentration. Because getting the feel of the car is so demanding, pulling off power slides, controlling skids and just making it around one lap without a crash is very rewarding.

V-Rally is the first game to write raw code directly to the chip set. And if you don't know what that means, well, it means graphics are fast and outrageously smooth. True, there's a little pop-up, but it hardly detracts from the playability of the game. Considering the slant towards realism the graphics remain good looking, and while backgrounds may seem a bit uninspired in comparison to *Rage Racer* they still manage to capture the feel of each setting. Steeper climbs and drops would have been a good idea, but perhaps the true courses are like this.

One of the most disappointing aspects of any racing game tends to be the limited number of tracks. No matter how polished a product is, when there are only three or four courses to choose from, longevity will inevitably be limited. V-Rally, however, boasts something like 40 separate stages as well as hidden cars and a superb two-player mode. Add all these features together and you have the best driving game available for the PlayStation.



WHILST V-Rally MIGHT NOT BE AS INSTANTLY ACCESSIBLE AS OTHER ARCADE RACERS, WITH AROUND 40 TRACKS AS WELL AS HIDDEN CARS, IT FEELS LIKE A VERY COMPLETE PACKAGE.

Opinion Hyper-sensitive controls, unforgiving car dynamics and courses from hell make V-Rally a real pig to get into. Patience and perseverance do reap big rewards however, as you discover a style of driving both hectic and amazingly satisfying. Packed with cars, tracks, modes and options, this game manages to fit neatly into the gap between arcade and simulation. Truly seat of the pants racing - run out and get it now. JM



PSP RATING...

Graphics : 93

Animation : 91

Sound FX : 90

Music : 55

Lastability : 96

Playability : 92

94



Ray Storm



With the distinct absence of vertical scrolling shoot 'em ups on the PlayStation Ray Storm comes over as something of a refreshing change. Surprising really, since the concept is as old as the hills. Ah, Just the thought of battling your way through the enemy hordes is enough to bring on misty-eyed nostalgia, transporting you to a time when Snickers were Marathons and afternoons were spent in front of a coin-op wiping sweat from your eyes and wishing you hadn't been so hasty with that last smart bomb.

DEJA VU?

Ray Storm won't be picking up any trophies in the Vertical Scrolling Shoot 'em Up Innovation Awards. It knows the script and it knows it well, right from the storyline onwards. The hook the carnage is hung upon is the



usual guff about saving the earth with our fair planet under threat from rebellious space colonies planning on blowing it to bits. But wouldn't you just know it, earth has developed a special craft, the R-GRAY, which is launched in a 'last desperate mission'™ to defeat the colonies - Operation Ray Storm. R-GRAY, we're told, is actually made up of bits from 13 other spacecraft which is ironic really, since the game is made up of bits from every scrolling shoot 'em up ever made. Yes, here you'll find a lone craft travelling through ever-more dangerous areas, collecting power-ups to

increase firepower. You'll find thousands of pesky minor aliens, loads of minibosses sprinkled liberally throughout each level and, of course, the final level boss which is ever more difficult to destroy as the game progresses. You'll even find a truly awful soundtrack. Well, if it ain't broke, don't fix it and this was never a formula in need of much fixing in the first place.

YOUR ARSENAL

Getting into Ray Storm is like getting into bed, it's that familiar. However, it does boast at least one feature you won't find elsewhere, a

lock-on laser attack which acts like a guided missile except for the fact the player dictates where it goes. It gives you the luxury of being able to lock onto several targets at a time and popping a cap in up to eight alien asses on automatic mode. If you're Luke Skywalker and you want to do things manually, the game rewards your confidence by allowing a lock-on of up to 16. The difference between the two R-GRAYS you get to choose from is that the second - and more advanced - has a nastier lock-on laser. The R-GRAY's other weapons are the usual missiles which increase in width

**IT'S TIME TO
SAVE THE
WORLD YET
AGAIN.
THERE'S
SQUILLIONS OF
MULTI-
COLOURED
ALIENS TO KILL
AND LOTS OF
AREAS TO KILL
THEM IN.
RECKON
YOU'RE UP TO
IT?**



Release : TBA
Company : TAITO
Price : TBA
Players : 1-2
Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP

LASERS LOCKED? FIRE!

Since aliens attack from a variety of different levels your missiles will not be enough to save the planet. So using the lock-on laser needs to be learnt. You can use it in one of two ways. Either keep blasting or be more scientific by manoeuvring the sight, locking on to as many enemies as possible and experiencing the deep satisfaction of a multiple kill.



GRAPHICS ARE GORGEOUS, ESPECIALLY IN THE SEASCAPE SCENES. EXPLOSIONS ARE PRETTY TASTY TOO.

and ferocity as power-ups are collected, as well as a Special Attack which is like a Smart Bomb except destruction isn't guaranteed - just kind of, er, helped.

ACTION APLENTY

Ray Storm takes pity on its players and eases them gently into the carnage with just a few ploppy aliens to use as target practice. The first level - set somewhere called Albion D.U. - is a top-down cityscape view which is fairly basic stuff but toughens up toward the end with a real mean git of a boss. It gives way to Old Gaul City. No sign of Asterix, but plenty of trippy wavy effects with submerged enemies and even dolphin-style aliens leaping from the waters and begging to be shot. By now things are becoming fairly busy and like

most of these kind of games when things get hectic it gets a tad difficult to make out exactly what's happening. After all, take yer alien craft, their lasers; your craft, your lasers (at full strength), the various scenery, shrapnel, power-ups and probably even the odd packed lunch here and there and you've got a screen that's fuller than a really full thing.

And here's the crunch. Because while all the on-screen activity means *Ray Storm* is action-packed it also has a double-edged knock-on effect: Firstly, with so many bits and pieces around at the same time the game can slow down. In fairness it doesn't happen often - and it's usually a blessed relief from the constant onslaught - but when it does it's like trying to steer your spaceship

through treacle. Secondly, it gets very difficult to see exactly what's going on. Nevertheless, these are minor quibbles since overall the gameplay is fast, frantic and generally superb and after all, what's a little slow-down when the game looks this good?

STOCK UP ON THE COFFEE

The number of levels coupled with the fact that, though easy at first, they soon get really nasty, means there's

gameplay by the skipload here, and you won't be discarding it after one session. A limited amount of continues ensures maximum frustration but it also means the game can't be completed in one sitting, so it's lots of late nights for you shoot 'em up fans. And, once the Arcade mode has been mastered there's an extra mode which is basically the same but includes maps and is just that bit more demanding. As you can see, there's a lot here to occupy your time.

IT'S DECISION TIME. FANCY THE RED R-GRAY OR THE PURPLE ONE? EACH HAS ITS OWN CHARACTERISTICS, SO PICK WISELY.



Opinion *Ray Storm* is just what we needed for the grey marvel: A vertical scrolling shoot 'em up in the traditional mould given a glossy PlayStation sheen. Tough and demanding without being off-putting, it's bound to appeal to hardcore fans and newcomers alike by mixing fast furious action with great graphics and highly addictive gameplay. OK, it's not new or original, but if it's solid arcade blasting carnage you crave, get it bought. AH



PSP Rating...
Graphics : 84
Animation : 82
Sound FX : 83
Music : 35
Lastability : 86
Playability : 89

83



BARON VON BLUBBA IS ENCAPSULATED IN A HUGE BUBBLE AT THE END OF THE FIRST STAGE. ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO POP THE BUBBLE AND COLLECT THE HUGE GEM AS A REWARD.

bubble Bobble 2 is the video game equivalent of a teenage girl's bedroom: everything is pastel-coloured and pretty. Gone are the black backdrops of the first *Bubble Bobble*, and the simply sketched sprites have also been replaced in favour of characters out of a My Little Pony comic. Yep, after Acclaim's *Bubble Bobble* compilation, Virgin has dragged Taito's arcade classic into the 90s.

Bub and Bob are two of the most endearing characters in gamedom. Unlike, say, Sonic whose charm has been eroded after a handful of weak games, Taito's *Bubble Bobble* series are synonymous with quality. The first *Bubble Bobble* was an immediately playable platformer, while *Rainbow Islands* was hailed as an



instant classic thanks to its superbly devised stages and perfect difficulty level. Even the weakest of the trilogy, *Parasol Stars*, made comparable platform games look dull. Now, with retro fever in full swing, Virgin is cross-pollinating 'something old' with 'something new', for a game drawing its inspiration from past *Bubble Bobble* outings, and adding the aforementioned sugar-coated levels.

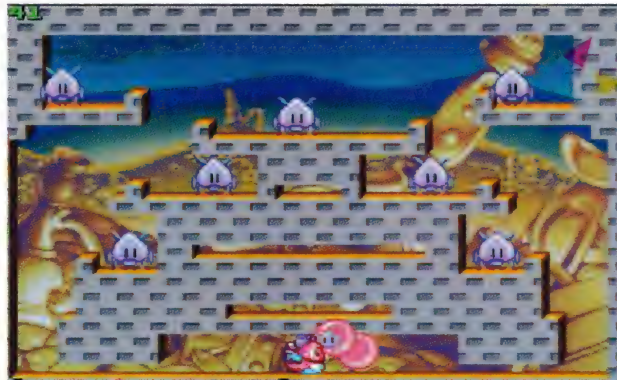
LOOKS FAMILIAR
Bubble Bobble 2 is spread across 120 flick-screen stages lifting ideas from other games in the series and upping the ante in virtually every department. Bub and Bob, the two mainstays of the series, are now joined by Kululun and Coronon, two



female adventurers. In addition to adding sexual equality to the series, the girls are used to add extra skill to the basic bubble-blowing idea. Bub (now renamed Bubblum and familiarly green-skinned) is the all-rounder, while Bobblum is armed with fast-powered bubbling skills. Kululun and



Cororon, on the other hand, specialise in high jumps and faster speed respectively. While these individual skills are a notable addition to the game, in practice they make little difference, as the control problems associated with the series are annoyingly present. *Bubble Bobble* used to have a teeth-grinding foible

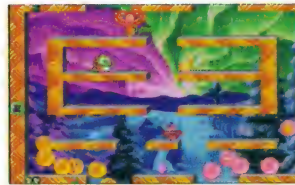


Release : JUNE
Company : VIRGIN
Price : £34.99
Players : 1-2
Genre : PLATFORM



THE LEVELS IN BUBBLE 2 ARE INTRICATE, AND ALLOW THE ASSORTED ENEMY

SPRITES TO HIDE IN SEEMINGLY UNREACHABLE POSITIONS.

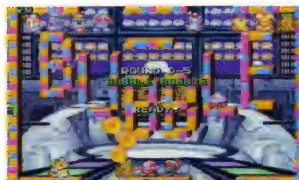


ARMED AND DANGEROUS

Acting as the final obstacle of each themed world are bizarre bosses. These also tie in with the look of each stage, and range from battleships through to bizarre Geisha girls who turn into statues, and the return of Baron Von Blubba from the first *Bubble Bobble*! Each boss follows a basic pattern, and located within each boss room are magic bubble potions. These endow the bubbling pair with lightning, whirlwind or water bubbles (among others), and these must be used to kill the bosses as they career around the screen. The state of the boss is determined by an energy bar at the top of the screen, and once this is whittled away they are finally ensnared in a bubble ready for popping – and bonuses galore!



(1-3) THE BOSSES ARE TIED IN WITH THE GRAPHICAL THEME OF EACH STAGE, INCLUDING SPACE INVADERS AND A ROBO-GODZILLA.



screen play areas. Within these, platforms are used to create symmetrical designs and words, and upon these the game's many deadly enemies can be found. The flimsy plot details how Bubblum and co have been turned into - wait for it - dinosaurs by the latest chief bad guy and his cohorts. As such, the game is spent trying to reach the big boss' lair to break the spell. The basic aim is thus to use the dinos' bubbling skills to capture the said meanies and jump up to pop the bubble, thus killing the trapped creature. But, hey, you probably knew that already.

Where *Bubble Bobble 2* scores brownie points is in its use of ideas from past Bub and Bob adventures. As well as the standard bubbles, old favourites including the water and lightning-filled spheres make a return, while fans of the series will recognise a colourful sphere which drops rainbows. In keeping with the 'something old, something new' idea, Taito has also thrown a host of new ideas in, including a mini-tornado bubble.

where bubbles would be slow in coming as the player pummeled the button while a meanie approached. Incredibly, the problem returned in *Rainbow Islands*. This video game equivalent of a curse is now found in *Bubble Bobble 2*. Still, at least Taito are consistent.

SAME OLD STORY

The sequel's levels are played within a succession of single-

Opinion *Bubble Bobble 2* follows the basic sequel route inch by inch. It has more levels, more bosses, better graphics, more characters, and pinches liberally from past games while adding dozens of new ideas to the mix. In fact, if you got a die-hard *Bubble Bobble* fan to write a wish list of ideas for inclusion in the next game, *Bubble Bobble 2* would fulfil their criteria. Yet, somehow, the sequel has also suffered as a result of the additions. The level designs and new power-ups slot in effortlessly, but the graphics are often confusing and the control method - which is incredibly simple - still has faults associated with the first, ten year-old game! Frankly, *Bubble Bobble 2* is stuck between a rock and hard place. It isn't going to convert anyone unfamiliar with the series as it still looks dated and decidedly 16bit, leaving it as the sole salvation for die-hard fans of the series. And how many of those are left? **SM**



WORLDS APART

Bringing a game as simple as *Bubble Bobble* up to date is difficult, and *Bubble Bobble 2* is actually weakened because of its lick of paint. The mixture of platform layouts and the creatures within is well balanced. However, the levels sport themes, and this is where the problems begin. Each stage spans seven or eight levels, and on defeating the boss presiding over them doorways appear offering a choice of routes. The worlds on offer are based on sunny days, TVs, Taito games, and vegetables - and the backdrops, baddies and bonuses

all reflect this. Sadly, with the pastel colours used for both the backdrops and sprites, when the screen gets packed with aliens and bubbles of all descriptions, lives are often lost as meanies appear from nowhere! Add this to the aforementioned niggles with delayed sprite reactions and you can hear the sound of hair being pulled out over the screams of frustration.

PSP RATING...

Graphics : 78

Animation : 64

Sound FX : 69.5

Music : 65

Lastability : 72

Playability : 76

74



AGENT ARMSTRONG IS YOUR STANDARD WHOLE-SOME HERO OUT TO SAVE THE KNOWN WORLD AGAINST ALL ODDS.



here have been a couple of attempts to produce Commando-style shoot'em ups on the PlayStation, but considering what the machine is capable of, these have proved quite a disappointment. *Lone Soldier* from Telstar and *Contra: Legacy Of War* from Konami were both let-downs in the playability stakes. Now, *Agent Armstrong* from Virgin is the latest in line to take a shot at the old 'one man and his gun take on the world' scrolling blast. Pure arcade action.

FIENDISH PLANS

It's 1930 and the world is under threat from a mysteri-

ous organisation known only as the syndicate. Bearing more than a passing similarity to the Nazis, these fiends are somehow set on world domination. Cue flat-topped central hero Agent Armstrong - the toast of the British Secret Service. God knows how this one man can save the day, but it's guaranteed there will be plenty of casualties along the way.

Those familiar with the genre will know not to expect anything over-complicated from *Agent Armstrong*: Rush about shooting enemies and mechanised weapons, avoid a constant barrage of projectiles, complete a few basic mission tasks and move on to the next level. At various points in the game action switches to a set area where a large boss confronts the player. Nothing new or startling, but if handled the right way games built on this formula can prove solid fun.

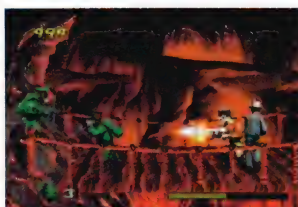


OFF TO A GOOD START

After spending some time grappling with the awkward and unfamiliar control system, *Agent Armstrong* starts out in quite promising fashion. Graphically most aspects of the game are pleasing enough. Take the sprites for instance. Armstrong himself moves nicely and has been given the quaint charm of a



Release : AUGUST
Company : VIRGIN
Price : £TBA
Players : 1
Genre : SHOOT 'EM UP



black and white film star. Adversaries are well designed using a unique chunky style giving them a three-dimensional feel. Explosions and special effects are meaty and satisfying, especially mota fire which takes up most of a screen and is dazzling. Polygons such as gun emplacements and vehicles are solid enough, although the scenery itself is sometimes a little dull and lifeless. Waterfalls, for instance, consist of static blocks and are a wasted opportunity. Interaction with the environment is not perfect either, with Armstrong failing to

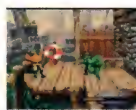
connect properly with uneven surfaces.

DOUBLE FAULT

Overall these slight graphical faults don't detract too much from the game.

Unfortunately there are other problems affecting the way the game plays. It's possible to fire weapons in all directions, including up and down, which is great for accuracy, but leads to a drawback - an inability to shoot while running. This means action stutters along rather than being fluid and travelling at a constant breakneck speed. Because avoiding gunfire and shooting become two separate actions, this also increases the difficulty, which is pretty damn tough in the first place.

Also annoying is the lack of a shadow beneath Agent's feet. Had this only affected appearances there'd be no problem, but without this little touch it



RUN AROUND AND SHOOT LOTS OF PEOPLE. NOT MUCH OF A BRAIN STRAIN BUT THEN AGENT ARMSTRONG IS STRICTLY ARCADE.

FIRE POWER

As we all know a Secret Agent is nothing without a suitcase full of deadly weapons at his disposal. Agent Armstrong can pick up flame throwers, missile launchers, grenades, gas bombs, wireless bombs and a whole bunch more besides. There's also no limit to the number of different special weapons that can be picked up, although ammunition is limited, and these are easily scrolled through using shoulder buttons. It's possible to shoot in four directions, diagonal, upwards and downwards. Getting to grips with each weapon is tricky at first, but developer King Of The Jungle has thoughtfully made Agent Armstrong spray in small arcs.



Opinion Mindless blasting, puzzles a small child could figure out and daft graphics make *Agent Armstrong* a game not to be taken too seriously. This is strictly an arcade blast and as such it's not bad. Special effects are big, loud and colourful, sprites have a style of all of their own and everything moves at a fair rate. However a few niggles, such as not being able to shoot on the move, the ease at which Agent falls off ledges and loading times let the game down. JM

becomes very difficult to judge exactly where the character is standing in relation to other objects.

Jumping from ledge to ledge, or simply lining the character up with something like a rope bridge is overly-complicated and consequently frustrating. Some of the dock levels include a rather attractive sea effect, but this is marred as

Agent continually plops into the water. Having said all of that Agent

Armstrong still has good points to offer. Thirty levels, each a reasonable length, shouldn't be sniffed at. Missions can be quite absorbing too, with a variety of tasks to complete. There's one where the player must abort the launch sequences of a batch of V2 bombs. Action becomes much more platform-based and the section involves loads of huge, attractive explosions.

What this all boils down to is that *Agent Armstrong* is a playable game suffering from a few faults that should have been ironed out in testing. It's fun for a while but lacks the ingredients to make it a classic example of the genre.

PSP RATINGS...

Graphics : 79

Animation : 77

Sound FX : 80

Music : 86

Lastability : 76

Playability : 74

75



Break-neck racing for 1-8 addicts. 48 Head-spinning 3D tracks. 32 Vehicles. Loads of weapons.

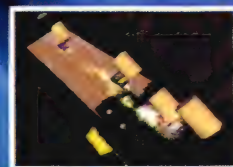
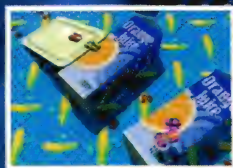
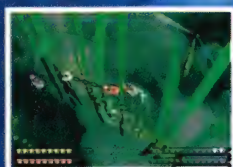
"THE GREATEST MULTI-PLAYER GAME FOR THE PLAYSTATION"

PlayStation Plus,
94%

Starting's easy. Stopping's the hard part.



MAXIMUM MULTI-PLAYER RACING



9/10 official PlayStation magazine, 9/10 PlayStation Pro, 94% PlayStation Plus,
92% Play magazine, 9/10 PlayStation Power, 91% Gamesmaster, 5/5 C&VG.



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Imagine a bizarre parallel universe where racing games don't exist. There's no *WipEout 2097*, no *Formula 1*, no *Rage Racer*, no *Destruction Derby*. Nothing.

If *Speed King* were to be introduced into this parallel world it would be hailed as some kind of classic. Fast, we'd froth; exciting, different and innovative. But this isn't a parallel universe. This is real life, racing games do exist and *Speed King* won't be hailed as any kind of classic at all. Oh.

It may be a conversion from the *Road Rage* coin-op, but basically it's a *WipEout* clone.

The player gets to choose a



high-tech vehicle before throwing it around the usual cluster of futuristic tracks. Nothing new there, so it won't surprise you to learn there's the normal choice of Speed Race, Time Attack, Battle or Free Run modes. While racing, steep corners are best negotiated using flaps which bank the player's craft and mastering their use is vital for mastering the *Speed King* experience.

Will you want to? Probably not, since it has more problems than Claire Rayner's postbag. Not only does it suffer by comparison

to the likes of *WipEout* and friends, it also fails to perform in its own right. The graphics are prehistoric, it's downright sluggish at times and - worst of all - it's just not very exciting. There are some things a player can put up with but boredom isn't one of them. Additionally, once the steering's been sussed the game is too easy to sustain much interest. Even in the difficult mode it won't take long to beat all comers on all tracks. Put simply, this world - already awash with racing titles - can well do without *Speed King*.

AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THE SHOTS HERE, SPEED KING INVOLVES CHASING ABOUT FUTURISTIC ARENAS AND TRYING TO CATCH ANOTHER... OOPS, SORRY, FELL ASLEEP JUST THEN.

Opinion You don't ask for much in this life, but you do expect a video game to have at least the tiniest semblance of excitement. *Speed King* doesn't know this. It thinks that if it looks similar enough to every other futuristic racer you will take it to your hearts. You won't though, because it's slow, boring and will occupy precisely three minutes of your time. Take it from me, boil an egg instead. AH



PSP RATING...

Graphics : 40
Animation : 55
Sound FX : 74
Music : 70
Lastability : 42
Playability : 50

45

Release : OUT NOW
Company : KONAMI
Price : Import
Players : 1
Genre : RACING



1 f *Ray Tracers* appeared on *Stars in Their Eyes* it would say, "tonight Matthew, I'm going to be... *Chase HQ!*" The two games, you see, are somewhat similar. And if you remember *Chase HQ*, you'll remember it involves driving a car at breakneck speed, catching baddies and knocking seven bells out of them until they give up. Er, which is what you also have to do in *Ray Tracers*.

The difference is that instead of regular cars, *Ray Tracers'* criminals are driving a crazy selection of vehicles including armoured cars, an attack helicopter, a Harrier jumpjet and a gigantic crane. Tracks are also tortuous and spectacular, with plenty of pesky hazards, leaps and obstacles, making for a stunt-filled car chase.

The player's motor survives all this punishment without getting a scratch, meaning other innocent vehicles can be smashed and destroyed for bonus points, as can the various oil drums, piles of wood etc. left all over the road. Turbo boosts are also available giving a short burst of crucial speed to help the player reach the next check-point or get that last hit to blow up the enemy before time runs out.

It's all presented with a cool Manga film feel, with pictures of the player's char-

acter (there are four to choose from, each with their own car), and the dispatcher, as well as occasional speech effects ("Full power!" "Now for the final blow!") from both of them to add a bit more cartoon atmosphere. The result is a rip-roaring slam-bang racing game which moves very quickly for a PAL conversion, piling on the tension and containing a lot more action than your average game.

Longevity though, is a major problem. There are only six levels in the game, and while they get tougher as the game progresses, the whole thing is over depressingly quickly.

A time trial mode has been included with four tracks, so players can try and beat their fastest lap times, but even with the option of duelling with another car, it doesn't add much to the staying power of the game. A great but short-lived experience, this is best suited to gamers with very deep pockets.



It's FLASH, IT'S FAST AND IT'S GOOD LOOKING. IT'S BASED ON A CLASSIC RACER AND IT'S GOT COOL MANGA CHARACTERS. BUT IT'LL LAST ABOUT FIVE MINUTES. BUGGER.

Opinion If you're a big fan of car chases, then *Ray Tracers* might look like the game for you. Sadly, while it has its fair share of tyre-screaming, car-jumping action, the game is over so quickly it's criminal. Taito has tried to increase the longevity by adding a time trial mode, but it's not enough to keep the decent gamer occupied for a very long time. A real shame because this is a great little game, but sadly too little to justify paying out over thirty quid for.

DB



PSP Rating...

Graphics : 80

Animation : 80

Sound FX : 74

Music : 72

Lastability : 62

Playability : 84

73

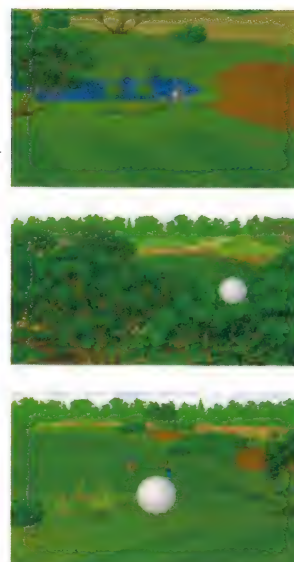
Release : AUGUST

Company : SCEE

Price : £34.99

Players : 1

Genre : RACING



THE IN-GAME CAMERAS OFFER TV-STYLE PRESENTATION AS THEY TRACK THE MOVING BALL AND PAN AROUND TO OFFER THE BEST POSSIBLE VIEW OF EACH SHOT.

Actua Golf²

i am Tiger Woods. Well, OK, I'm not actually Tiger Woods, but I'm better than him. In fact, I've just taken \$15,000 off him in a Skins match. Yes, once again, it is

golf season, with Gremlin returning to the green with a spruced-up sequel to *Actua Golf*. Along with the addition of Tiger and a supporting cast of famous golfers, Gremlin has added six brand new courses, enhanced the ball logic to incorporate spin and lobs, and thrown in a secondary commentator just for good measure.

Actua Golf is still recognised as the best golf game in an uninspired bunch. In all honesty, there is very little to split the PlayStation golfing pack, as each uses a variant of the same control method, with just the licences and course detail offering any variety. *Actua Golf*, however, was the most polished, and this sequel

MAIN COURSES

The six courses are a mixture of real and fictitious greens. The Oxfordshire plays host to the B&H Open, while Carnoustie is set to showcase the British Open in 1999, and Kiawah Island is a PGA venue. The rest have been concocted by Gremlin's development team, including a rather nasty 'Gremlin Interactive Variety' course peppered with a random selection of interesting holes.



THE HAZARDS ARE AS PLENTIFUL AS EVER, WITH THE ORIGINAL COURSES MANAGING TO BE EVEN MORE DEVIOUS THAN THE REAL ONES GREMLIN HAS COPIED.

Opinion *Actua Golf 2* is as user-friendly as golf games come. The wealth of cameras add TV-style presentation, while the motion capture and 3D courses add realism. The main problem with *Actua Golf 2*, however, is that the majority of additions are purely cosmetic. Yes, the ball logic is noticeably better. But surely it is time to tinker with the control system? The all-too-familiar power bar does not reflect the skill of the real thing, and while *Actua Golf 2* is the best of its kind it also represents a missed opportunity.

SM

shines even more.

Nevertheless, while *Actua Golf 2* gleams, its control method is as familiar as ever. Once again, the skilful game is reduced to pressing the X button at the right time. Golf is an incredibly complex sport, requiring timing and precision on the player's part. Pressing the X button when a power bar reaches a set point on a gauge does not compare. Yes, the shots are sliced



if the correct point is missed, but surely a more precise control system should be attempted? Ah well, despite a lack of initiative, *Actua Golf 2* can still claim to be the best golf game available for the PlayStation. But in such a limited field, it's hardly something to crow about.



Release : JULY
Company : GREMLIN
Price : £44.95
Players : 1
Genre : SPORTS SIM

Graphics : 86
Animation : 87
Sound FX : 74
Music : 62
Stability : 82
Playability : 84

83

WHO CARES IF THE GRAPHICS ARE LESS ARTY WHEN THERE'S ALL THIS COOL STUFF TO DO? THINK I'LL BUILD ME ONE MORE BASE BEFORE BED-TIME.



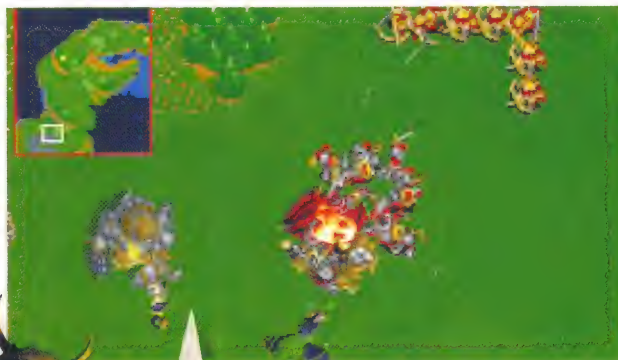
Warcraft²

Command and Conquer might have given gamers a thirst for action-filled strategy, but *Warcraft 2* offers the thinking gamer a lot more in terms of planning campaigns of war. Set in a fantasy world, the player can take the side of humans or orcs as they fight a war for ultimate supremacy. Here, resource management plays a greater part than *Command and Conquer*, with a lot more emphasis on planning the building of your base and units.

The 52 missions in the main campaigns involve far more than merely conquering the enemy. Often it's simply a matter of constructing buildings in order to help the war effort and planning in which order to build things is also important. This planning aspect doesn't make the game dull however, because there's plenty of action to be had. The enemy wants resources too, and won't give them up without a fight. The inclusion of sea combat brings another level to the game, since no place is safe from the conflict.

This is a superb game, with plenty of things to do and build, and lots of well-designed levels. By including a custom scenario mode the lastability is increased

Release : OUT NOW
Company : EA
Price : £44.95
Players : 1
Genre : STRATEGY



A MOUSE WOULD HAVE THINGS EASIER WHEN IT COMES TO POINTING AND CLICKING.



Opinion Imagine *Command and Conquer* with more depth (but worse graphics) set in a fantasy land and you'll have a fair idea what *Warcraft 2* is all about. The action isn't as fast and furious as *C&C*, but there's so much to do in the game you won't notice. True, you can't use a mouse, and that makes things fiddly at times, but this is still going to draw you in and keep you playing for ages. Highly recommended. **DB**



TUT. IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME. JUST WHEN YOU THINK THE GAME'S ALL PLANNING AND BUILDING THE ENEMY ARRIVES.

immeasurably, with the player being able to create their own levels so that the fun need never end. The graphics aren't up to much, but the gameplay is so engrossing and the sound so good that the looks aren't noticed anyway. The lack of a mouse option though is really quite unforgivable, since these are the kinds of games for which a mouse is ideal. What's more, a two-player link up mode would have made this

something of a classic. As it is, this is a brilliant strategy game with enough action and depth to have any armchair general rubbing their hands with glee.

Graphics : 74
Animation : 72
Sound FX : 82
Music : 86
Lastability : 92
Playability : 86

88



YOU CAN BOUNCE AROUND ALL YOU LIKE IN TEST DRIVE: OFF ROAD. THEN AGAIN, THERE'S BETTER WAYS TO BOUNCE AROUND.

Test Drive: Off Road

after the lacklustre *Hardcore 4x4* and *Monster Trucks* comes the next attempt at making a good game out of the idea of taking cars with big wheels 'off roading'. Unfortunately, Eidos' effort manages to be the worst game of the bunch. The premise is quite an interesting one though, with races taking place on a variety of harsh terrain with four different vehicles (a humvee, Jeep, Land Rover and pickup truck) to choose from. The twist is each course has a number of checkpoints which have to be passed in numerical order before a lap can be completed. This means players can create their own shortcuts as they race, since the whole game area can be driven on. It's a sound idea which, sadly, doesn't work because,

since the checkpoints have to be passed in order, the best you can do is try and cut corners creatively. And to make matters worse, the graphics are truly awful.

Cars and scenery don't look too bad, but the pop-up is atrocious. If you've ever wanted to demonstrate what pop-up is, then gather your mates round *Test Drive: Off Road*, because it's possibly the best (meaning the worst) example of scenery appearing out of nowhere on the PlayStation. At times it's so bad that you have to keep your eye on the in-game map just so you know where you're going. In its favour, it does move very quickly for an off-road game, and there are a few nice jumps to make, but the overall impression is of a substandard product that is best left well alone.



IT'S DIFFICULT TO SHOW POP-UP HERE SO TO FIND OUT HOW BAD IT IS, GO OUT AND BUY THE GAME. ER, ON SECOND THOUGHTS...



Opinion If I ever have a nightmare about racing games, then *Test Drive: Off Road* will probably feature heavily. The reason being that not only is this game devoid of excitement and playability, but it features some of the worst pop-up ever seen on the PlayStation. Not even worth a look for novelty value, this is a great definition of a waste of time. DB

Release : OUT NOW
Company : EIDOS
Price : £39.99
Players : 1-2
Genre : DRIVING



Graphics : 52
Animation : 60
Sound FX : 63
Music : 67
Lastability : 42
Playability : 49

46

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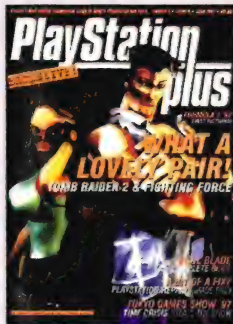
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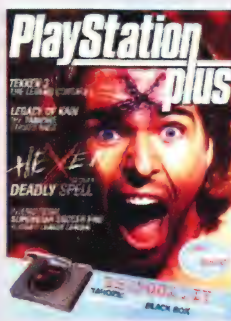
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Review Index

Just what the bowl of bran is the best multi-player game on the PlayStation anyway? And what score did we give Resident Evil? And how can you settle that bet you made about the number of PlayStation games with NBA in the title? All these questions and more answered in what can only be described as a fully comprehensive 'guide'.

KEY TO ICONS



THIS ICON SHOWS THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS THAT CAN COMPETE AT THE SAME TIME.



THIS ICON INDICATES WHETHER THE TITLE USES A MEMORY CARD TO SAVE GAMES TO.



DOES THE GAME HAVE A TWO-PLAYER LINK-UP OPTION? IT WILL IF THIS ICON IS TICKED.



SOME STRATEGY GAMES AND SHOOT 'EM UPS SUPPORT THE MOUSE.



THIS WILL SHOW IF A GAME IS MULTITAP COMPATIBLE. SOME CAN SUPPORT TWO MULTITAPS.



GAME USES SPECIAL CONTROLLERS, SUCH AS THE NEGCN, STEERING WHEEL AND LIGHT GUN.

NAME	PRICE	COMPANY							COMMENT	SCORE
2XTREME	£44.99	SCEE	1-2	✓					POOR SEQUEL TO EXTREME GAMES WHICH OFFERS FEW IMPROVEMENTS.	55
3D LEMMINGS	£44.99	PSYGNOSIS	1	✓		✓			SMART 3D GRAPHICS BUT UNINTERESTING AND AWKWARD GAMEPLAY.	81
ACTUA GOLF	£44.99	GREMLIN	1-4	✓					CYBER GOLF AT ITS MOST REALISTIC. THE BEST GOLF GAME ON THE PLAYSTATION.	88
ACTUA SOCCER	£44.99	GREMLIN	1-2	✓					SLICK 3D GRAPHICS ARE ECLIPSED BY FLAWED GAMEPLAY. NICE, BUT DATED.	82
ACTUA SOCCER: CLUB EDITION	£44.99	GREMLIN	1-2	✓					THE SAME ACTUA SOCCER WITH THE PREMIER TEAMS. TOO LITTLE TOO LATE.	60
ADIDAS POWER SOCCER	£44.99	PSYGNOSIS	1-4	✓			✓		ANOTHER FOOTBALL GAME WHICH FAVOURS COOL GRAPHICS OVER GAMEPLAY.	93
ADIDAS SOCCER INT' '97	£44.95	PSYGNOSIS	1-4	✓			✓		DECIDEDLY AVERAGE FOLLOW UP TO ADIDAS POWER SOCCER.	70
AGILE WARRIOR	£39.99	VIRGIN	1	✓					CHALLENGING BUT NEAT ARCADE-STYLE AIRCRAFT-BASED SHOOT 'EM UP	85
AIR COMBAT	£39.99	NAMCO	1-2	✓					TEDIOUS, LACKING DEPTH AND VARIETY EVEN IN TWO-PLAYER MODE.	80
AIV EVOLUTION GLOBAL	£44.99	SCEE	1	✓		✓			ENJOYABLE IF SOMEWHAT OVERWHELMING RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SIM.	86
ALIEN TRILOGY	£44.95	ACCLAIM	1	✓					AN EXCELLENT DOOM CLONE WHICH CAPTURES ALL THE SCARES OF THE FILMS	93
ALONE IN THE DARK	£39.99	INFOGRAMES	1	✓					INTERESTING PUZZLES FAIL TO MAKE UP FOR THE GAME'S DATED PRESENTATION.	82
ANDRETTI RACING	£44.99	EA	1-4	✓	✓				A LIGHTWEIGHT ALTERNATIVE TO THE FANTASTIC FORMULA 1.	85
AQUANAUT'S HOLIDAY	£39.99	SCEE	1	✓					ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY UNDERWATER ADVENTURE THAT IS FRANKLY DULL.	53
AREA 51	£44.99	GT	1-2	✓		✓		LIGHT GUN	A BLAND SHOOT 'EM UP BASED ON A BLAND ARCADE GAME.	52
ASSAULT RIGS	£44.99	PSYGNOSIS	1-2	✓	✓				A NICE IDEA WHICH IS TOO SIMPLE AND EASY FOR ITS OWN GOOD.	81
ATARI COLLECTION	£44.95	GT	1-2	✓					RETRO-GAMING COMPILATION WITH DUBIOUS APPEAL.	75
AYRTON SENNA'S KART DUEL	£44.99	PHILIPS	1-2	✓	✓				SUBSTANDARD RACING ACTION FROM PHILIPS. AVOID AT ALL COSTS.	32
BALLBLAZER CHAMPIONS	£44.99	ACTIVISION	1-2	✓					FAST FURIOUS AND FUN FUTURE FOOTBALL GAME PLAYED WITH SPACESHIPS.	87
BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 2	£49.99	TAKARA	1-2	✓					VISUALLY SUPERB BUT LACKING ANY REAL MEATY SUBSTANCE.	71
BATTLE STATIONS	£44.95	EA	1-2	✓					ORIGINAL BUT BADLY EXECUTED NAVAL WARFARE GAME.	52
BATMAN FOREVER	£44.99	ACCLAIM	1-2	✓					BEAT 'EM UP BOREDOM IN THE EXTREME. EVEN IF YOU'RE A BATFAN, REWARE.	28
BEDLAM	£44.99	GT	1	✓		✓			A MOUSE PROVES INVALUABLE FOR THIS FRANTIC TACTICAL BLASTER.	87
BIG HURT BASEBALL	£44.99	ACCLAIM	1-2	✓					A PRETTY GOOD ADAPTATION OF A FAR FROM THRILLING SPORT.	81
BLACK DAWN	£44.99	VIRGIN	1	✓					THE EQUALLY GOOD SEQUEL TO THE EXPLOSIVE AGILE WARRIOR.	86
BLAST CHAMBER	£44.99	ACTIVISION	1-4	✓			✓		ANYONE FOR A GAME OF FUTURISTIC TAG? I THOUGHT NOT.	54
BLAM! MACHINEHEAD	£44.99	CORE DESIGN	1	✓					INITIALLY CONFUSING BUT ULTIMATELY GRIPPING 3D BLASTER.	89
BLAZING DRAGONS	£44.99	BMG	1	✓					GOOD HUMOURED IF SOMETIMES LABORIOUS GRAPHIC ADVENTURE.	87
BREAK POINT	£44.99	OCEAN	1-4	✓	✓		✓		A PLEASANT ENOUGH TENNIS GAME, ALTHOUGH THE MOVES AREN'T INTUITIVE	73
BROKEN SWORD	£44.99	SCEE	1	✓		✓			SUPERB POINT AND CLICK ADVENTURE, WITH A STRONG STORY AND ATMOSPHERE.	90
BURNING ROAD	£44.99	FUNSOFT	1-2	✓	✓				THE PLAYSTATION EQUIVALENT OF DAYTONA USA. GOOD GAMEPLAY AND LOOKS.	88
BUBBLE BOBBLE PACK	£44.95	ACCLAIM	1-2	✓					ONE OF THE BEST RETRO COLLECTIONS TO DATE, OFFERING TWO GAMES IN ONE.	84
BUST-A-MOVE 2	£29.99	ACCLAIM	1-2	✓					ONE OF THE CUTEST, MOST INCREDIBLY ADDICTIVE PUZZLE GAMES OF ALL TIME.	82
CARNAGE HEART	£34.99	SCEE	1-2	✓					BUILD ROBOTS, THEN TURN THEM LOOSE TO FIGHT IN THIS STRATEGY GAME.	74
CASPER	£44.95	INTERPLAY	1	✓					AIMED AT THE YOUNGER PLAYER. NICE GRAPHICS BUT VERY AVERAGE.	62
CHEESY THE MOUSE	£44.95	OCEAN	1	✓					THE AWFUL MAIN SPRITE HIDES SOME GREAT PLATFORM ACTION.	82
CHESSMASTER 3D	£44.95	EA	1-2	✓					TOUGH CHESS SIM, BUT ONLY FOR THOSE WITH NOBODY TO PLAY.	87
CITY OF THE LOST CHILDREN	£44.95	PSYGNOSIS	1	✓					GRAPHICALLY BRILLIANT BUT INCREDIBLY ANNOYING ADVENTURE GAME.	68
COMMAND AND CONQUER	£44.99	VIRGIN	1	✓					CONQUER THE WORLD IN THIS FAST-PACED STRATEGY GAME. A CLASSIC.	81
CONTRA: LEGACY OF WAR	£44.95	KONAMI	1-2	✓				3D GLASSES	3D VERSION OF THE CLASSIC KONAMI SHOOT EM UP. SOLID BLASTING ACTION.	83
COOL BOARDERS	£44.99	SCEE	1	✓					YOU CAN'T PLAY TWO PLAYERS, BUT THIS IS BRILLIANT SNOWBOARDING FUN.	81
CRASH BANDICOOT	£44.99	SCEE	1	✓					FRUSTRATING IT MIGHT BE, BUT THIS IS ONE OF THE BEST PLATFORMERS AROUND.	86
CRITICOM	£44.99	IMAGINEER	1-2	✓					GREAT GRAPHICS, BUT THIS 3D BEAT 'EM UP STILL LOSES OUT TO TEKKEN.	82
CROW 2	£44.99	ACCLAIM	1	✓					DIRE FIGHTING GAME BASED ON THE MOVIE WHICH SHOULD BE LEFT WELL ALONE.	33
CRUSADER	£44.95	EA	1	✓					TOP-NOTCH SHOOTING AND EXPLORING ACTION IN THIS LONE COMMANDO GAME.	85
CRYPT KILLER	£44.99	KONAMI	1-2	✓				LIGHT GUN	POSSIBLY THE WORST LIGHT GUN GAME EVER. STAY AWAY!	27
CYBER SLED	£39.99	NAMCO	1-2	✓					A DULL ARCADE SHOOTING GAME WHICH SHOWS EVEN NAMCO MAKE MISTAKES.	69

NAME	PRICE	COMPANY							COMMENT	SCORE
CYBER SPEED	£39.99	MINDSCAPE	1-2	✓					A SPACE AGE RACING GAME ON WIRES. NOT A WIP-EOUT BEATER.	88
CYBERIA	£39.99	INTERPLAY	1	✓					HANDFUL OF SHOOTING AND PUZZLE GAMES WHICH FAIL TO IMPRESS.	60
D	£44.99	ACCLAIM	1	✓					STUNNING BUT SHORT. GREAT GRAPHICS BUT ONLY AN HOUR TO COMPLETE.	83
DARK FORCES	£44.99	VIRGIN	1	✓					ENGROSSING STAR WARS DOOM CLONE WITH DATED GRAPHICS.	84
DARKLIGHT	£44.95	EA	1	✓					DIFFICULT, YET STUNNING 3D SPACE GAME WITH SOLID GAMEPLAY.	87
DARKSTALKERS	£44.99	VIRGIN	1-2	✓					STREET FIGHTER MEETS HORROR CHARACTERS MEETS AVERAGE GAMEPLAY.	78
DAVIS CUP TENNIS	£44.95	TELSTAR	1-4	✓			✓		THIS MANAGES TO BE ONE OF THE WORST PLAYSTATION TITLES TO DATE.	50
DEFCON 5	£49.99	SCEE	1	✓					3D ADVENTURE INVOLVING MORE WANDERING THAN ACTION.	72
DESCENT	£44.99	INTERPLAY	1-2	✓	✓				DOOM IN SPACESHIPS. GREAT IDEA, GREAT GAME.	80
DESCENT 2	£44.99	INTERPLAY	1-2	✓	✓				NOT MANY IMPROVEMENTS ON THE ORIGINAL, BUT STILL A GOOD SHOOT 'EM UP.	82
DESTRUCTION DERBY	£49.99	PSYGNOSIS	1-2	✓	✓			NEGCON/WHEEL	LENGTHY PLAY REVEALS A SHALLOW GAME, GREAT WITH TWO PLAYERS THOUGH.	89
DESTRUCTION DERBY 2	£44.95	PSYGNOSIS	1	✓	✓			NEGCON/WHEEL	A HUGE IMPROVEMENT ON THE ORIGINAL, WITH FASTER CARS AND WIDER TRACKS.	89
DIE HARD TRILOGY	£44.99	FOX INTERACTIVE	1	✓			✓	GUN/WHEEL	THREE GAMES FOR THE PRICE OF ONE, AND TOP MOVIE ACTION IN ALL OF THEM.	82
DISCWORLD	£39.99	SCEE	1	✓			✓		COMEDY ADVENTURE WITH SOME OF THE MOST ANNOYING PUZZLES EVER.	71
DOOM	£44.99	GT	1-2	✓					THE ORIGINAL 3D MAZE SHOOT 'EM UP. STILL OOZES PLAYABILITY.	82
EARTHWORM JIM 2	£44.95	VIRGIN	1	✓					CONVERSION OF A SNES CLASSIC THAT MANAGES TO BE A LESSER COPY.	79
EPIDEMIC	£34.95	SCEE	1	✓					SEQUEL TO KILEAK THE BLOOD FAILS TO IMPROVE ON A POOR GAME.	64
ESPN EXTREME GAMES	£39.99	SCEE	1-2	✓					ODDBALL SPORTS RACING GAME WITH A TOUCH OF VIOLENCE. BRILLIANT FUN.	90
EXCALIBUR 2555AD	£44.99	TELSTAR	1	✓					SOLID ADVENTURE GAME FEATURING PLENTY OF COMBAT AND MAGIC.	85
EXHUMED	£44.95	BMG	1	✓					ONE OF THE BEST AND MOST CHALLENGING DOOM-STYLE GAMES AROUND.	90
EXTREME PINBALL	£44.95	EA	1-2	✓					POOR PINBALL TITLE, WITH UNREALISTIC BALL MOVEMENT.	44
FADE TO BLACK	£44.99	EA	1-2	✓					ABSORBING 3D SEQUEL TO FLASHBACK. PLENTY TO SEE, DO AND SHOOT.	81
FIFA '96	£44.99	EA	1-4	✓			✓		FOOTIE GAME WITH LITTLE CONTROL OVER PLAYERS AND BAD CAMERA VIEWS.	82
FIFA '97	£44.99	EA	1-4	✓			✓		NOT MUCH IMPROVEMENT OVER '96 SINCE IT PLAYS SO VERY SLOWLY.	64
FINAL DOOM	£44.99	GT	1-2	✓		✓			THIRTY NEW DOOM LEVELS TO EXPLORE, BUT STILL THE SAME GAME.	89
FIRESTORM: THUNDERHAWK 2	£44.99	CORE	1	✓					THE 3D GRAPHICS AREN'T PERFECT BUT THIS IS STILL A GREAT HELICOPTER GAME.	86
FIRD AND KLAUD	£44.95	BMG	1-2	✓					INTERESTING BUDDY COP GAME, LET DOWN BY HAVING NO SAVE GAME OPTION.	82
FLOATING RUNNER	£44.99	XING	1	✓					PLAYABLE 3D PLATFORMER WITH STRANGE VIEWPOINT AND CONTROLS.	81
FORMULA 1	£44.99	PSYGNOSIS	1-2	✓	✓			NEGCON/WHEEL	THE ULTIMATE SIMULATION DRIVING GAME.	83
GALAXIAN 3	£49.99	NAMCO	1-4	✓		✓	✓	NEGCON	GRAPHICALLY IMPRESSIVE SHOOT 'EM UP, BUT LACKING IN PLAYER INTERACTION.	36
GEX	£44.99	BMG	1	✓					A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF A DULL PLATFORMER.	68
GOAL STORM	£39.99	KONAMI	1-2	✓					LARGE SPRITES IN THIS FOOTBALL GAME, WHICH MOVE TOO SLOWLY BY FAR.	66
GRID RUN	£44.95	VIRGIN	1-4	✓	✓		✓		'TAG' GAME WHICH IS ONLY FUN IN MULTIPLAYER MODE.	64
GUNSHIP	£44.99	MICROPROSE	1	✓					COMPLEX AND PLAYABLE HELICOPTER SIM, BUT NOT THAT REALISTIC.	83
HARDCORE 4X4	£44.99	GREMLIN	1	✓				WHEEL	DULL ALL-TERRAIN RACING GAME WITH TOO FEW TRACKS.	83
HEBEREKE POPOITTO	£39.99	SUNSOFT	1-2	✓					TWO PLAYER PUZZLE GAME. FUN, BUT BUST-A-MOVE 2 IS BETTER.	42
HENEN	£44.95	GT	1-2	✓					THE GRAPHICS MAY BE SLOW AND BLOCKY, BUT THIS DOOM CLONE HAS DEPTH.	84
HI-OCTANE	£44.99	BULLFROG	1-2	✓					TEDIOUS RACING GAME LACKING IN SUBSTANCE.	76
INDEPENDENCE DAY	£44.95	FOX INTERACTIVE	1-2	✓					DATED SHOOT 'EM UP BASED LOOSELY ON THE HIT FILM.	69
IMPACT RACING	£44.95	JVC	1-2	✓	✓				UNUSUAL RACING GAME WHICH MIXES DESTRUCTION DERBY WITH MAD MAX.	82
IN THE HUNT	£39.99	THQ	1-2	✓					2D SUBMARINE SHOOT 'EM UP WITH PLENTY OF THINGS TO FIRE AT.	79
INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD	£44.99	KONAMI	1-4	✓			✓		AN ADDICTIVE SPORTS SIM THAT EXCELS IN ITS MULTI-PLAYER MODE.	83
ISS DELUXE	£44.95	KONAMI	1-2	✓					STRAIGHT CONVERSION OF THE CLASSIC SNES FOOTIE GAME.	66
ISS PRO	£44.99	KONAMI	1-2	✓					THE GREATEST FOOTBALL GAME ON THE PLAYSTATION. ENOUGH SAID.	92
IRON AND BLOOD	£44.95	ACCLAIM	1-2	✓					AVERAGE 3D BEAT 'EM UP WITH A FANTASY THEME.	67
IRON MAN	£44.99	ACCLAIM	1-2	✓					SHODDY DRIVEL. A BAD GAME AND A WASTE OF A GREAT COMICS LICENCE.	22
JET RIDER	£44.99	SCEE	1-2	✓					INNOVATIVE RACER IS LET DOWN BY POOR GRAPHICS AND GAMEPLAY.	63
JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE	£39.99	DS GOLD	1	✓					ROCK 'N' ROLL PLATFORMER WITH POOR GAMEPLAY.	60
JONAH LOMU RUGBY	£44.99	CODENMASTERS	1-4	✓			✓		BRILLIANT RUGBY SIMULATION, PLAGUED BY FIDDLY CONTROLS.	84
JUMPING FLASH	£39.99	SCEE	1	✓					SUPERB 3D PLATFORMER WHICH SADLY HAS TOO FEW LEVELS.	89
JUMPING FLASH 2	£44.99	SCEE	1	✓					PERFECT SEQUEL TO JUMPING FLASH, BUT STILL NOT ENOUGH LEVELS.	88
K1	£44.99	THQ	1-2	✓					SUBSTANDARD BEAT 'EM UP WITH REASONABLE GRAPHICS.	55
KRAZY IVAN	£39.99	SCEE	1-2	✓	✓				A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF GRAPHICS OVER PLAYABILITY IN THIS ROBOT GAME.	73
LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE	£44.99	EA	1	✓					BRILLIANT CONVERSION OF THE PC ADVENTURE CLASSIC.	90
LEGACY OF KAIN	£44.99	BMG	1	✓					VAMPIRE ACTION/ADVENTURE GAME OFFERING A HUGE ENJOYABLE CHALLENGE	82
LOADED	£39.99	GREMLIN	1-2	✓			✓		ACTION PACKED BLASTER BUT LACKING IN VARIETY.	75
LOMAX IN LEMMINGLAND	£44.95	PSYGNOSIS	1	✓					LEMMINGS INSPIRED PLATFORMER WHICH FAILS TO IMPRESS.	70
LONE SOLDIER	£39.99	TELSTAR	1	✓					COMMANDO IN 3D BUT SADLY IT'S ALL TOO SLOW.	72
LOST VIKINGS 2	£44.99	INTERPLAY	1-2	✓					AVERAGE ARCADE GAME WHICH OFFERS LITTLE ORIGINALITY.	63
MACHINE HUNTER	£44.95	EIDOS	1-2	✓					TOP-DOWN SHOOT 'EM UP WHICH TAKES ON LOADED AND GIVES IT A KICKING.	88
MADDEN NFL '97	£44.99	EA	1-2	✓					SOLID AMERICAN FOOTBALL SIMULATION WITH GREAT DEPTH.	86
MAGIC CARPET	£44.99	BULLFROG	1	✓					FAST 3D SORCERY SHOOT 'EM UP WITH MANY LEVELS TO EXPLORE.	80

A screenshot from the video game 'Burnout 3: Takedown'. The main view shows a car performing a high-speed crash or stunt on a road. In the top-left corner, there is a HUD with icons for a map, a car, a speedometer, and a fuel gauge, along with numerical data. In the top-right corner, a small map of the game area is visible. The bottom-left corner shows a speedometer and a 'Burnout' meter. The bottom-right corner displays the game's title 'Burnout 3: Takedown' and the developer 'GAMES BY GAMES BY GAMES BY'.

RALLY CROSS.....83

NAME	PRICE	COMPANY							COMMENT	SCORE
RELOADED	\$44.95	GREMLIN	1-2	✓					MARGINALLY BETTER THAN THE ORIGINAL, WHICH WASN'T THAT GOOD.	73
RESIDENT EVIL	\$49.99	VIRGIN	1	✓					THIS HORROR ADVENTURE IS ONE OF THE MOST PERFECT GAMES EVER.	94
RETURN FIRE	\$44.95	WARNER	1-2	✓					EXCELLENT TWO PLAYER FUN IN THIS MILITARY CAPTURE THE FLAG GAME.	91
REVOLUTION X	\$39.99	ACCLAIM	1-2	✓					ROCKERS AEROSMITH STAR IN THIS AWFUL SHOOT 'EM UP. AVOID.	48
RIDGE RACER	\$39.99	NAMCO	1	✓					EXCELLENT RACING GAME, SADLY LACKING IN TRACKS.	88
RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION	\$49.99	NAMCO	1-2	✓	✓				AN IMPROVEMENT ON THE ORIGINAL, NOW WITH A TWO-PLAYER LINK UP MODE.	87
RISE 2 RESURRECTION	\$44.99	ACCLAIM	1-2	✓					A MEDIOCRE BEAT 'EM UP.	78
RIOT	\$44.95	PSYGNOSIS	1-16	✓		✓			SPEEDBALL-TYPE GAME OFFERS LITTLE.	67
ROAD RASH	\$44.99	EA	1-2	✓					STRAIGHTFORWARD FIGHTING AND RACING GAME.	64
ROBOTON - X	\$44.95	GT	1-2	✓					SIMPLE MINDED FUN IN THIS UPDATE OF AN ARCADE CLASSIC.	66
SAMPRAS EXTREME TENNIS	\$44.95	CODEMASTERS	1-4	✓		✓			EASE OF PLAY MAKES THIS TENNIS GAME A JOY TO BEHOLD.	89
SENTIENT	\$44.95	PSYGNOSIS	1	✓					AMBITIOUS BUT OVERLY COMPLEX ADVENTURE SET ON A SPACE SHIP.	71
SHELLSHOCK	\$44.99	CORE DESIGN	1	✓					DULL AND REPETITIVE TANK GAME.	75
SHOCKWAVE	\$39.99	EA	1	✓					EMPTY SHOOT 'EM UP WITH TINY SPRITES AGAINST BLAND BACKGROUNDS.	56
SIM CITY 2000	\$44.99	MAXIS	1	✓		✓			RUN YOUR OWN CITY IN THIS ENGROSSING CONVERSION OF A PC CLASSIC.	91
SKELETON WARRIORS	\$44.95	VIRGIN	1	✓					THIS LOOKS LIKE A 16BIT GAME, AND PLAYS EVEN WORSE.	69
SLAM 'N' JAM '96	\$44.95	BMG	1-2	✓					UNPLAYABLE BASKETBALL GAME.	64
SMASH COURT TENNIS	\$44.95	NAMCO	1-4	✓		✓			SLOW AND UNRESPONSIVE CONVERSION OF THE 16BIT CLASSIC.	57
SOCCER '97	\$44.95	EIDOS	1-4	✓		✓			OLYMPIC SOCCER SEQUEL SUFFERS FROM AN OUTDATED GAME ENGINE.	81
SOUL BLADE	\$34.95	SCEE	1-2	✓					NAMCO DO IT AGAIN WITH THIS CLASSIC WEAPONS-BASED BEAT 'EM UP.	94
SOVIET STRIKE	\$44.99	EA	1	✓					3D CHOPPER SHOOT 'EM UP WITH GREAT GRAPHICS AND GAMEPLAY.	82
SPACE HULK	\$44.95	EA	1	✓					NOT THE FASTEST GAME AROUND, BUT THIS IS A GOOD ACTION/STRATEGY MIX.	84
SPACE JAM	\$44.95	ACCLAIM	1-2	✓					UNINSPIRING MOVIE CASH-IN BASKETBALL GAME.	65
SPEEDSTER	\$44.95	PSYGNOSIS	1-2	✓					TOP-DOWN RACING GAME CURIOUSLY LACKING IN SPEED. AND PLAYABILITY.	64
SPIDER	\$39.99	BMG	1	✓					INNOVATIVE BUT ULTIMATELY AVERAGE PLATFORMER.	70
SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD	\$34.95	VIRGIN	1	✓					TOO LITTLE TOO LATE FOR THIS PASSABLE PLATFORMER. GREAT MUSIC THOUGH.	77
STAR GLADIATOR	\$44.95	VIRGIN/CAPCOM	1-2	✓					CAPCOM'S FIRST 3D BEAT 'EM UP, AND IT'S NOT HALF BAD.	91
STARFIGHTER 3000	\$44.95	TELSTAR	1	✓					NICE ENOUGH TO LOOK AT BUT ULTIMATELY A DULL SHOOT 'EM UP.	80
STARWINDER	\$44.95	MINDSCAPE	1	✓					SIMPLISTIC RACING GAME WHERE EVERY LEVEL PLAYS THE SAME.	59
STEEL HARBINGER	\$44.95	MINDSCAPE	1	✓					UNSPECTACULAR GRAPHICS AROUND IN THIS OCCASIONALLY FUN SHOOT 'EM UP.	79
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA	\$44.99	VIRGIN	1-2	✓					UPDATE OF THE STREET FIGHTER SERIES WHICH INCLUDES NEW SUPER MOVES.	91
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2	\$44.95	VIRGIN	1-2	✓					CUSTOM COMBOS AND COUNTER MOVES BEAT IT'S PREDECESSOR HANDS DOWN.	82
STREET FIGHTER THE MOVIE	\$39.99	ACCLAIM	1-2	✓					A COMPLETE INSULT TO THE STREET FIGHTER NAME.	67
STREET RACER	\$44.95	UBISOFT	1-8	✓		✓			A FAIR RACING GAME WITH PLENTY TO DO BUT NOT MUCH EXCITEMENT.	79
STRIKEPOINT: THE HEX MISSIONS	\$44.95	ELITE	1-2	✓					POOR HELICOPTER GAME. GO FOR SOVIET STRIKE INSTEAD.	60
STRIKER '96	\$39.99	WARNER	1-4	✓		✓			ONE OF THE MORE SIMPLISTIC FOOTBALL GAMES.	69
SUIKODEN	\$44.99	KONAMI	1	✓					SOLID RPG THAT ISN'T GOING TO SET THE WORLD ALIGHT BUT WORTH A LOOK.	81
SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER 2	\$39.95	VIRGIN	1-2	✓					DEVILISHLY ADDICTIVE PUZZLE GAME FEATURING RYU, KEN AND FRIENDS.	82
SUPERSONIC RACERS	\$44.95	MINDSCAPE	1-2	✓					MICRO MACHINES-STYLE RACER DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH PACE TO ENTHRALL.	74
SWAGMAN	\$44.99	EIDOS	1	✓					ARCADE ADVENTURE FUN APLENTY IN THIS GREAT LOOKING 2D GAME.	85
SYNDICATE WARS	\$44.95	EA	1-4	✓		✓	✓		ULTRA COOL VIOLENT STRATEGY SHOOT 'EM UP WITH AMAZING 3D GRAPHICS.	82
TEKKEN	\$39.99	NAMCO	1-2	✓					NAMCO'S FIRST 3D BEAT 'EM UP. SUPERB, BUT OVERSHADOWED BY ITS SEQUEL.	83
TEKKEN 2	\$49.99	NAMCO	1-2	✓					IMPROVES ON THE ORIGINAL IMMENSURABLY. ONE OF THE BEST FIGHTING GAMES.	85
TEMPEST X3	\$34.99	INTERPLAY	1-2	✓					AN UPDATE OF A GREAT RETRO SHOOTER.	80
TENKA	\$44.95	PSYGNOSIS	1	✓					POLYGON GRAPHICS CAN'T SAVE THIS AVERAGE DOOM-CLONE.	82
TEN PIN ALLEY	\$44.95	EA	1-8	✓					THIS COULD HAVE BEEN GOOD FUN, BUT IT ENDS UP BEING A NOVELTY TITLE.	54
THEME PARK	\$44.99	BULLFROG	1	✓					ONE OF THE GENTLER 'SIM' GAMES AVAILABLE.	85
TIGER SHARK	\$44.99	GT	1	✓					AN IMPOSSIBLY HIGH DIFFICULTY LEVEL RUINS THIS EXCELLENT SHOOT 'EM UP.	72
TIME COMMANDO	\$44.99	EA	1	✓					UNUSUAL BUT FUN TIME-TRAVEL FIGHTING GAME.	81
TOTAL NO.1	\$44.99	SCEE	1-2	✓					A FAIR BEAT 'EM UP GREATLY IMPROVED BY THE ADDITION OF A QUEST MODE.	91
TOMB RAIDER	\$44.95	CORE DESIGN	1	✓					FEMALE INDIANA JONES ANTICS ON THE SONY. ONE OF THE BEST GAMES EVER.	92
TOP GUN: FIRE AT WILL	\$44.95	MICROPROSE	1	✓					REPETITIVE MOVIE SPIN-OFF FLIGHT SIM.	66
TOTAL NBA '96	\$44.99	SCEE	1-8	✓		✓			SUPERB BASKETBALL GAME WITH INCREDIBLE ATTENTION TO DETAIL.	83
TOTAL NBA '97	\$34.95	SCEE	1-8	✓		✓			IMPROVED GRAPHICS AND GAMEPLAY MAKE THIS A WORTHY FOLLOW-UP.	85



SYNDICATE WARS.....92



TOTAL 2.....92



TRASH IT.....57



VR BASEBALL.....

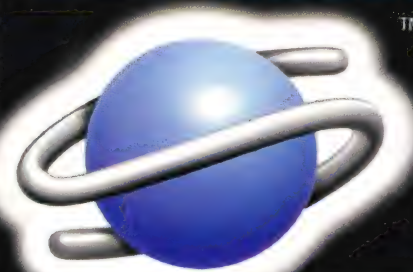


SOUL BLADE.....93

NAME	PRICE	COMPANY							COMMENT	SCORE
TOKYO HIGHWAY BATTLE	£39.99	THQ	1	✓					SUB RAGE RACER GAME WITH AVERAGE GRAPHICS.	77
TRANSPORT TYCOON	£44.99	OCEAN	1	✓		✓			BUILD ROADS, RAILWAYS, DOCKS AND AIRPORTS IN THIS GREAT GOD SIM.	86
TRASH IT	£44.95	GT	1-4	✓			✓		PLATFORMER WITH GOOD IDEAS BUT LACKING IN IMMEDIATE ACTION.	57
TRUE PINBALL	£39.99	OCEAN	1	✓					FOUR TABLES IT MIGHT HAVE, BUT IT STILL LOSES OUT TO THE WEB'S ONE.	92
TUNNEL B1	£44.99	OCEAN	1	✓					WIPEOUT CROSSES WITH DOOM IN THIS HIGH-SPEED SHOOT 'EM UP.	89
TWISTED METAL	£39.99	SCEE	1-2	✓					DESTROY THE SUBURBS IN THIS MAD MAX-STYLE CAR BATTLE.	82
TWISTED METAL 2	£44.95	SCEE	1-2	✓					AN EXCELLENT SEQUEL WHICH IS GRANDER IN SCALE AND THRILLS.	88
VANDAL HEARTS	£44.95	KONAMI	1	✓					AVERAGE GRAPHICS DON'T SPOIL THIS HUGE PLAYABLE AND ENGROSSING RPG.	86
VICTORY BOXING	£44.95	JVC	1-2	✓					DEEPER THAN MOST FIGHTING GAMES, THIS TAKES SOME GETTING INTO.	74
VIRTUAL GOLF	£44.95	CORE DESIGN	1-4	✓					A POOR COUSIN TO ACTUA GOLF.	57
VIRTUAL POOL	£44.99	INTERPLAY	1-2	✓					A GREAT POOL GAME OFFERING REALISTIC SIMULATION.	85
VR BASEBALL	£44.99	INTERPLAY	1-2	✓					A FINE CONVERSION OF THE SPORT, BUT UNLIKELY TO ATTRACT ANYONE BUT FANS.	72
V TENNIS	£44.95	ACCLAIM	1-2	✓					MEDIOCRE TENNIS SIM THAT'S HARD TO GET INTO.	75
WARGODS	£44.95	GT	1-2	✓					DERIVATIVE 3D FIGHTING GAME WITH MUSHY GRAPHICS AND LOUSY GAMEPLAY.	59
WARHAMMER	£44.99	MINDSCAPE	1	✓					THIS ABSORBING WARGAME HAS DEPTH, IF NOT LOOKS.	86
WARHAWK	£39.99	SCEE	1	✓					INSTANTLY PLAYABLE FLYING GAME WITH GREAT WEAPONS.	82
WCW VS THE WORLD	£39.99	THQ	1-2	✓					BRILLIANT WRESTLING GAME WITH 60 CHARACTERS, INCLUDING HULK HOGAN.	88
WILLIAMS ARCADE CLASSICS	£29.99	GT	1-2	✓					RETRO COMPILATION WITH FIVE GOOD GAMES OUT OF SIX, INCLUDING DEFENDER.	89
WING COMMANDER III	£44.99	EA	1	✓					SUPERB MOVIE SEQUENCES MIX WITH POOR GAMEPLAY IN THIS SPACE OPERA.	80
WING COMMANDER IV	£44.95	EA	1	✓					BETTER FMV AND WORSE GAMEPLAY THAN WC III LET THIS GAME DOWN BADLY.	50
WIPEOUT	£49.99	PSYGNOSIS	1-2	✓	✓			NECCON	ULTRA-FAST STYLISH RACING GAME. A MUST FOR SPEED FREAKS EVERYWHERE.	91
WIPEOUT 2097	£44.95	PSYGNOSIS	1-2	✓	✓			NECCON/WHEEL	BETTER IN EVERY RESPECT, THIS IMPROVES THE GRAPHICS AND IS EVEN FASTER.	94
WORLD CUP GOLF	£39.99	US GOLD	1-8	✓					COMPETENT GOLF GAME WITH GREAT GRAPHICS.	80
WORMS	£39.99	OCEAN	1-4	✓					MULTI-PLAYER JOY WILL BE YOURS IN THIS FABULOUS BATTLE GAME.	92
WWF IN YOUR HOUSE	£44.95	ACCLAIM	1-4	✓			✓		BELOW-AVERAGE WRESTLING GAME WHICH OFFERS LITTLE AND PROVIDES LESS.	48
WWF WRESTLEMANIA	£39.99	ACCLAIM	1-4	✓			✓		ENTERTAINING FIGHTING GAME WITH DEADLY SPECIAL MOVES.	83
X2	£44.95	TEAM 17/OCEAN	1-2	✓					TEDIOUS SHOOT 'EM UP WHICH IS FAR TOO DIFFICULT.	58
X-COM: ENEMY UNKNOWN	£44.99	MICROPROSE	1	✓		✓			STRATEGY GAMING AT IT'S VERY BEST AS YOU TAKE ON ALIEN INVADERS.	88
X-COM: TERROR FROM THE DEEP	£44.99	MICROPROSE	1	✓		✓			X-COM UNDERWATER, EVERYTHING ELSE IS THE SAME.	82
ZEITGEIST (JUPITER STRIKE)	£39.99	ACCLAIM	1	✓					SLOW, CLUMSY 3D SHOOTING GAME WHICH LACKS APPEAL.	43
ZERO DIVIDE	£44.99	OCEAN	1-2	✓					A SOUND ENOUGH FIGHTING GAME WHICH DOESN'T AMAZE.	72

IMPORT GAMES

DOUBLE DRAGON	IMPORT	TECMO	1-2	✓					THIS BEARS LITTLE RESEMBLANCE TO THE COIN-OP AND IS EXTREMELY DULL.	49
DYNASTY WARS II	IMPORT	CAPCOM	1-2	✓					THERE'S LITTLE THOUGHT REQUIRED IN THIS ACTION-PACKED SAMURAI GAME.	68
EXECTOR	IMPORT	ARC	1	✓					LOADED-STYLE GAME WITH EVEN LESS PLAYABILITY.	62
FIRE PRO WRESTLING	IMPORT	HUMAN	1-2	✓					THE WRESTLERS LOOK GREAT, BUT THE GAME IS DULL.	63
GUNBIRD	IMPORT	ATLUS	1-2	✓					INITIALLY A FUN SHOOT 'EM UP WHICH PROVIDES SOME SHORT-LIVED LAUGHS.	74
HEBERKE POPOITTO	IMPORT	SUNSOFT	1-2	✓					BASIC FUN PUZZLER, BUT BUST A MOVE 2 IS BETTER.	74
HERMIE HOPPERHEAD	IMPORT	SONY	1	✓					FRUSTRATING, REPETITIVE AND JUST A PLAIN AWFUL PLATFORM GAME.	38
HORNED OWL	IMPORT	SONY	1-2	✓				LIGHT GUN	THE FIRST PLAYSTATION LIGHT GUN GAME, AND ONE OF THE MOST TEDIOUS.	68
HYPER FINAL MATCH TENNIS	IMPORT	HUMAN	1-4	✓			✓		BAD ANIMATION AND POOR GAMEPLAY COMBINE TO MAKE AN AWFUL GAME.	63
HYPER FORMATION SOCCER	IMPORT	HUMAN	1-2	✓					FOOTBALL GAME WITH OVERLY COMPLEX CONTROLS AND POOR GRAPHICS.	33
MEGAMAN X3	IMPORT	CAPCOM	1	✓					EXCELLENT PLAYSTATION ADDITION TO THE LONG RUNNING PLATFORM SERIES.	81
METAL JACKET	IMPORT	SOLAN	1	✓					CUSTOMISE YOUR GIANT ROBOTS, THEN LET THEM LOOSE IN THIS DULL GAME.	65
MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM	IMPORT	BANDAI	1	✓					EXTREMELY DULL ROBOT-BASED SHOOT 'EM UP. AVOID.	37
MOTOR TOON GP	IMPORT	SONY	1-2	✓	✓				CUTE RACING GAME WHICH LACKS SPEED. THE SEQUEL IS FAR SUPERIOR.	51
NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 4	IMPORT	NAMCO	1-2	✓					WEAKEST OF THE 5 NAMCO RETRO COLLECTIONS, ONLY PAC LAND STANDS OUT.	67
NAMCO MUSEUM VOLUME 5	IMPORT	NAMCO	1-2	✓					PAC-MANIA, METRO CROSS AND DRAGON SPIRIT PEP UP THIS RETRO COLLECTION.	79
PARAPPA THE RAPPER	IMPORT	SONY	1	✓					VERY ORIGINAL AND FUN VIDEOGAME VERSION OF 'SIMON SAYS'.	82
POWER INSTINCT 2	IMPORT	ATLUS	1-2	✓					ONE OF THE WORST FIGHTING GAMES EVER, FEATURING KUNG-FU GRANNIES!	48
REVERTION	IMPORT	TECMO	1	✓					BIZARRE 3D BATTLE GAME. GRAPHICALLY STUNNING, BUT FAR TOO EASY.	21
STANLFEDER	IMPORT	SINTOS	1	✓					A BASIC, YET ENJOYABLE SHOOT 'EM UP.	77
STREET FIGHTER II (INT. MOVIE)	IMPORT	CAPCOM	1	✓					UNPLAYABLE ATTEMPT TO MAKE A STREET FIGHTER "INTERACTIVE MOVIE".	54
SUPER BIG BROTHER	IMPORT	NCS	1	✓					SHOOT 'EM UP STARRING UNDERPANT-WEARING HERO. TOTALLY SURREAL.	53
SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER 2	IMPORT	CAPCOM	1-2	✓					INTENSELY ADDICTIVE PUZZLE GAME STARRING RYU, KEN AND THEIR CHUMS.	82
TOTAL 2	IMPORT	SQUARESOFT	1-2	✓				ANALOGUE PAD	SUPERB FIGHTING GAME WITH ADDITIONAL QUEST MODE. A BRILLIANT SEQUEL.	92
TOSHINDEN 3	IMPORT	TAKARA	1-2	✓					DERIVATIVE FIGHTING GAME THAT CAN'T STAND UP TO NAMCO'S GAMES.	76
TOSHINDEN KIDS	IMPORT	TAKARA	1-2	✓					POLISHED BUT SIMPLISTIC VERSION OF TOSHINDEN AIMED AT YOUNGER GAMERS.	60
TWIN BEE	IMPORT	KONAMI	1-2	✓					TWO SHOOTING STYLES DOESN'T MAKE THIS DATED GAME ANY BETTER.	55
TWO-TEN KAKU	IMPORT	CLUB DEP	1-2	✓					RUN OF THE MILL VERTICAL SHOOT 'EM UP WHICH OFFERS NOTHING NEW.	76
XEVIOUS 3D/G+	IMPORT	NAMCO	1-2	✓					XEVIOUS GETS A DULL 3D MAKEOVER IN THIS RETRO COMPILATION.	60



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ISSUE 22

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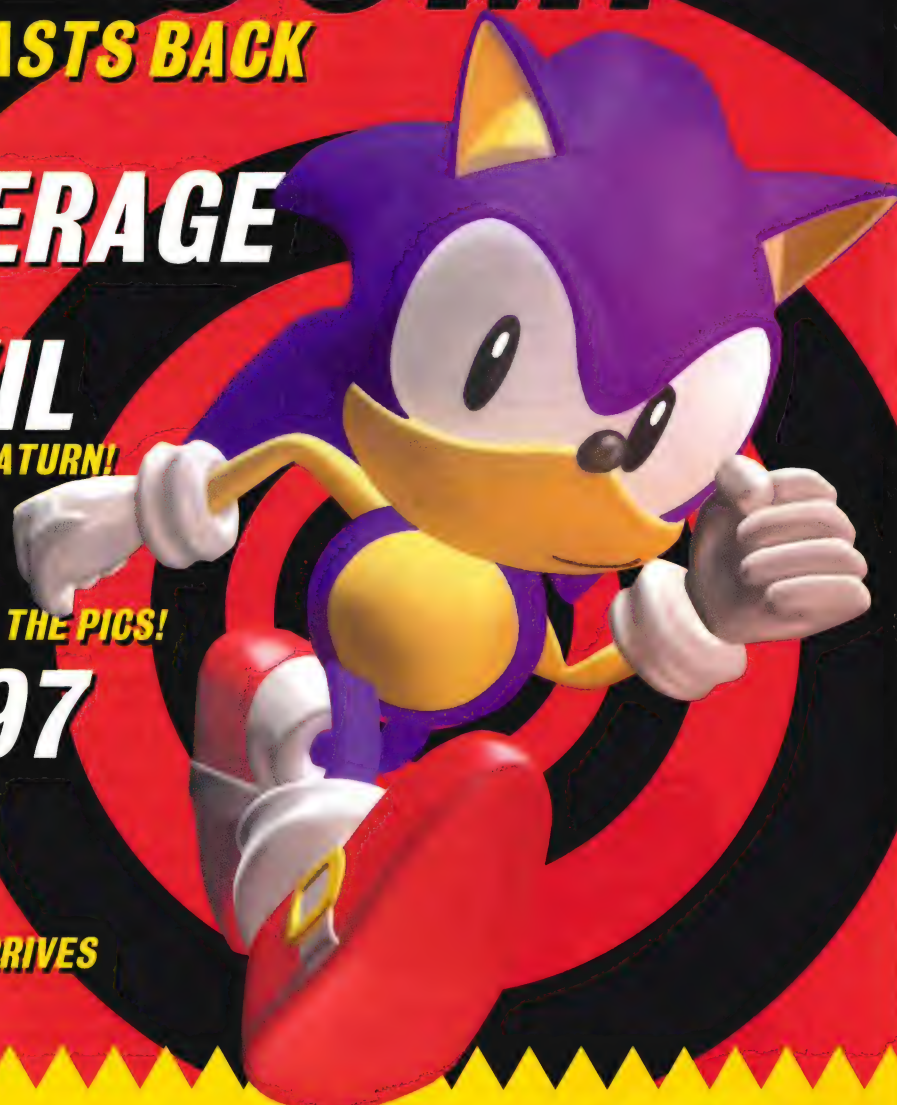
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Media

MORE ITEMS OF **MERCHANDISE** CURRENTLY AVAILABLE THAT WE BELIEVE WILL BE OF INTEREST TO **PLAYSTATION GAMERS EVERYWHERE.**

BATMAN AND ROBIN HAS SPLIT OPINION IN THE PLAYSTATION PLUS PLAYPEN, BUT WHATEVER YOUR OPINION THE BOOK'S WORTH A LOOK. ON THE VIDEO FRONT WARNER ARE GETTING BUSY WITH SOME WIDESCREEN RE-RELEASES, WHILE TITAN DOES ITS SIMPSONS THANG AND PRODIGY PROVIDE THE PERFECT SOUND-TRACK.

BOOKS

THE MAKING OF BATMAN AND ROBIN

PRICE: £8.99
RELEASED BY: TITAN BOOKS
RATING: ★★★★★

While the film isn't exactly a high point in Batman's long history, Titan's behind-the-scenes book is well worth a look. The film is an incredibly fast-paced showcase of action scenes, and as such some of the more intricate detail the set designers and costumiers have added are often lost. In the book, however, we are shown how Poison Ivy's lair was created, and shown incredible stills of the work that went into Arnie's Mr Freeze suit. Let's face it, in a book like this it's pictures you want to see, and Titan has done us proud. Every aspect of the film's production has been snapped and laid out, and while the text is on the minimal side it is informative and covers all bases. Titan have really taken the 'Making Of' book market by the horns, and this is well up to the standard of the Star Trek: First Contact and Independence Day books. That said, their Art of Mars Attacks is a tough act to follow, and this is some way behind that masterpiece.

THE SIMPSONS: WINGDINGS

PRICE: £6.99
RELEASED BY: TITAN BOOKS
RATING: ★★★★★

Titan's Simpsons compilations are the perfect complement to what is one of the best series on TV (if only the BBC would put it on regularly). The latest round-up of Bongo Comics strips contains six strips furthering the adventures of Springfield's finest. Just as the series occasionally showcases members of the

community, so does Wingdings as Apu the Kwik-E-Mart owner joins forces with the evil Mr Burns to create a huge shopping mall. Similarly, Ugolin and Cesar, two French miscreants who worked Bart like a dog in the first series, return with Sideshow Bob as Bart and Millhouse return to France. The TV show is brilliant

because it creates laughs across several levels. As well as the obvious gags, you have to watch what's happening in the background or for small minor details for even more hits. The books recreate this perfectly, and

all the characters are perfectly in tune with their TV counterparts. At £6.99 Wingding is one of the best pieces of Simpsons merchandise available. Only one of the strips lets the side down (the incredibly arse 'Citizen Shame', but as it only spans a mere six or seven pages we'll let it go. If you're a Simpsons fan and feeling frustrated that BBC2 keeping removing it from their schedules, this is perfect to stop you going cold turkey.

VIDEO

V EPISODES 10-11

PRICE: £9.99
RELEASED BY: BEYOND VISION
RATING: ★★★

The end is almost nigh, with just six more episodes of V to go. And, suprisingly, these two are some of the best the series has to offer. With the huge ensemble cast rarely having much to do, one regular is offed, and the producers step up the heat against the resistance by adding a new Visitor leader. Charles, who is immediately at loggerheads with the fit Diana (Charles and Diana. Geddit? Very 80s), first tries to brainwash Ham (appropriate name) into killing Donovan by showing him pictures of Donovan snogging his dead wife, who we're reminded

about every episode. He fails, of course, but in the crossfire Nathan Bates gets shot, leading into the next episode. With Bates ill and not trusting the Visitors, his number two, Chaing, strikes a deal with Charles and they prepare to execute sympathisers to the resistance unless Donovan and co give themselves up. The luckless Robin duly falls for a bloke she's barely spoken to, and this allows a twist for the next tape. V: The Series was always a bit of a hotch-potch, but these two episodes really show some promise. The Visitors come across as extremely devious, and the warring between Diana and Charles is handled well (especially when compared to the bickering between the resistance). A moderate high in a weak series, surely it can only get better?

HIGHLANDER

PRICE: £5.99
RELEASED BY: THE BIG PICTURE
RATING: ★★★★★

Highlander is one of the seminal 80s action films. While others released at the same time (Cobra, Tango and Cash, and Beverly Hills Cop) have dated terribly, Highlander is a timeless classic. There cannot be any-one unfamiliar with the plot of immortals battling it out for 'The Prize', but Highlander turns what could be a naff idea into a very entertaining film. The characters hunting 'The Prize' are all immortal, and can only be killed via decapitation. Thus, each battle between the Immortals is played out with huge swords. Honour is everything to these people, but one rogue - Kurgan - is using any trick possible to claim the mythical Prize. Sean Connery is the boz as Ramirez, an immortal who takes the film's hero Connor MacLeod (Christopher

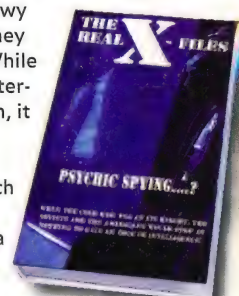
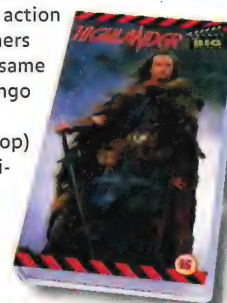
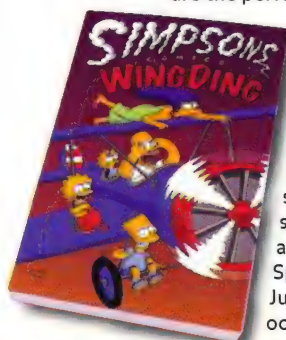
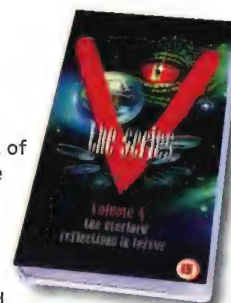
Lambert) under his wing and teaches him the honour of battle. Highlander is a brilliant film, and the action scenes and plot are as impressive now as they were when it

was first released. It is also one of those films that BBC and ITV never seem to replay (preferring to show things like Meteor and April Fools Day time and time again), and as such, with the new six quid price tag, it's an essential purchase. However impressed you may be with it, though, do not under any circumstances feel you should rent or buy the sequels. Some things are best left alone.

THE REAL X-FILES

PRICE: £9.99
RELEASED BY: VERTEX HOME ENTERTAINMENT
RATING: ★★

Ever since Mulder and Scully flashed their bright torches in countless parts of Canadian forestland, the country has become alien mad again. TV shows about alien abductions are common, as are X-Files clone shows such as Dark Skies. The Real X-Files was originally shown on Channel 4's Equinox, and is 50 minutes of digging about trying to find the truth regarding areas of US intelligence which the authorities would rather keep quiet. The tape deals with Psychic Spying, and how less than orthodox methods are used to crack crimes. The documentary talks to men and women who have served in America's oh-so-secret division. During the course of the interview they talk about strange sights seen and the shadowy people who they worked for. While it is all very interesting, though, it is only something you'll probably watch once. And hardly worth a video release, really.



DIABOLIQUE

PRICE : £10.99
RELEASED BY: WARNER VIDEO
RATING: ★★

Diabolique is a classic example of a film that twists itself into knots. Sharon Stone and Isabelle Adjani play two women in contention for one man. Stone is of course the sexy and confident one, while Adjani is the man's wife who also suffers from heart palpitations. With the latter as wet as a shark's swimming cossie, her husband, Guy (Chaz Palminteri), treats her like dirt - much to Stone's annoyance. So they plan to kill him, and drown the arrogant sod in a bath and dump his body in the swimming pool at the school where they all work. Except, the body disappears and everything goes further pear-shaped when messages from Guy start to appear. Diabolique has all the makings of a good thriller, but the characters and plot twists let it down badly. The final twists are pretty absurd and despite the obvious play to shock the

viewer, at this point they'll be past caring! Stone is her usual self and seems to be on auto-pilot, and none

of the main leads really stand out. Kathy Bates also does a turn as a cop investigating Guy's disappearance, but again she's nothing to shout about. A very average film, and not exactly the best example of a thriller around today.

THE FUGITIVE OUTBREAK INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE

PRICE: £10.99 EACH
RELEASED BY: WARNER VIDEO
RATING: ALL ★★★★★

Warner are currently home video's best friend, releasing films worth seeing in their original widescreen format. After years of releasing obscure Hammer horrors or cult oddities on to the public in the widescreen aspect and with trailers, Warner have now looked to more recent releases. Thus, for the first time, The

Fugitive, Outbreak, and Interview With the Vampire are set for the widescreen plus trailer treatment. All three films are worthy of the cinematic treatment, with The Fugitive's action scenes (and the train crash, in particular) really benefiting from the longer picture. Even if you're not into the charms offered by the widescreen format and couldn't give a toss about the addition of the trailers, these are still three of the best films from Warner in years. The Fugitive is superb on every level, with a taut plot mingling with incredible action sequences. The same can be said of Outbreak, with Dustin Hoffman racing to find a cure for a virulent plague while the plot dumps more and more tension on him and his medical cohorts. And finally we have Interview. Now you either love or hate Tom Cruise (and men usually occupy the latter camp), but he really does become Lestat the decadent blood-sucker in this well told version of the Anne Rice book. All three films are worthy additions to the popular widescreen collection, but if you have to pick one, go on the run with Harrison Ford. It's a hell of a journey.

BABYLON 5

PRICE: £11.99
RELEASED BY: WARNER
RATING: ★★★★★

All credit must go to Warner for sticking with the Babylon 5 collection. It is currently one of the few sci-fi programmes on

the TV worth watching, and with the BBC treating crap such as Crime Traveller as sci-fi, is a much needed shot of space hokum. The first series of Babylon 5 left lot to be desired, it was too talky and

the action scenes were few and far between. As the series reaches tape 24, though, it is well and truly in its stride. Tape 24 contains two more season three stories, Voices of Authority and Dust to Dust. The Shadow war was one of the great inventions by the series, and these two episodes are built under the umbrella scenario of this epic battle. In Voices the battle is not going well, and Ivanova turns to an ancient race for help. Meanwhile, in Dust to Dust, the Shadows take second place to a traditional drug story, which sees G'Kar (a series stalwart) go ape after taking the powder. The one benefit of the slow first series is that by now, we know almost all of the characters on the Babylon 5 base intimately, and genuinely give a toss what happens to them. This adds extra depth to what could have been just another 'Space Soap' like the disappointing Space: Above and Beyond, and also makes for a series which gets better and better as it progresses. Another strong tape from a very strong series.

MUSIC

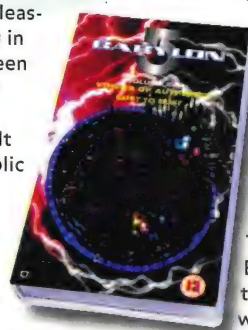
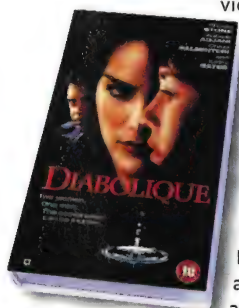
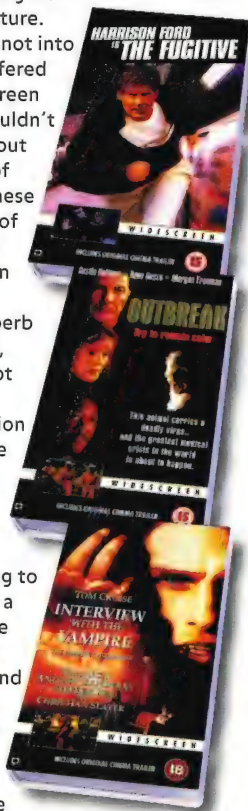
PRODIGY - THE FAT OF THE LAND

PRICE : £12.99
RELEASED BY: XL RECORDINGS
RATING: ★★★★★

With Prodigy's career going seriously ballistic following the chart residencies of Firestarter and Breathe, all Liam and co.

needed to do was deliver a more-of-the-same album. And they have. The Fat of the Land heaves with adrenalin-fuelled big beat epics scored with buzzsaw guitar - each one a potential single.

Potential, that is, were it not for some of the non-Radio One friendly titles. After all, Smack my Bitch Up and Funky Shit are unlikely to make Simon Mayo's playlist. Controversial monikers aside though, this is the Prodigy album for the Firestarter fans - fast, thrilling and punky electronica with about as much subtlety as a sawn-off shotgun. For sheer breathless energy there's no-one to touch them. And long may they reign.



Plus Points

SEND YOUR VIEWS AND COMMENTS TO:
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RAGING RACER

Picture the moment. The trepidation. The excitement. The trembling fingers as you carefully open the box, free leaflets and memory card stickers tumbling free as you fumble for the disc, the epiphany of two hours on the bus and a quick run to and from the bus stop. Discarding the already perused instruction booklet you slot the disc into the grey box of tricks known as "The PlayStation". You press the on button and the familiar "schwing" of the PlayStation warming up is heard. You sit agitated through endless loading screens till finally you hear "Rage Racer" in a female voice. You press start, already your fingers are geared up for a busy nights play on *Rage Racer*, the supposed (note the "supposed") King of Racers. you scramble through the decent looking options till you get to the start of the race. You note that the graphics are indeed a little dull and grey but you don't mind for this game promises to be the game of the year, nay the century. And after one hour of play you feel totally cheated and dejected. You sit, controller dangling free from you hand, wondering what came over you and made you buy the game known as *Rage Racer*. A suitable name because once you play it you will eventually suffer rage at the way you have been tricked into buying a crap game.

That is my feelings for Saturday afternoon. I bought *Rage Racer* because many a magazine said it was "the best racing game- EVER". I thought 'how can so many people be wrong???' so I went to my local software dealer and bought the game. I got home and after one hour I was gutted. I'd never played any of the *Ridge Racer* games because I was busy sampling the delights of *Tomb Raider*,



little white lie he finally agreed and I went home with a copy of *Wipeout 2097*

Resident Evil and *Destruction Derby 2* and I doubt I will play a *Ridge Racer* game again. The graphics are chunky, the backgrounds make John Major look psychedelic and the bloody woman's voice throughout the race soon annoys the heck out of you. The engine sounds like a cat being strangled and even the possibility of 'powersliding into oblivion' is crap. I am a fairly decent gamesplayer so when I say the powersliding is uncontrollable I think I can safely say it is uncontrollable. It wouldn't really matter so much that you careen from side to side after trying (and mostly failing) to powerslide around a corner, except for the fact that there is an invisible wall about three feet into the track. Why can't we drive over the grass just a little bit, instead of being caged in like rats?

Ultimately I feel I have been conned. I don't usually fall for the hype surrounding a game but this time everyone was soooooo sure it was great I felt I couldn't go wrong. But I did.

Are there any other readers out there who feel cheated by the hype surrounding the aforementioned or any other game? I know I did feel cheated so this morning I went back to the software dealer and asked him if I could return the game and swap it for another. After a

seen - especially when you start tuning and customising a car from scratch.

GET YER BITS OUT

I am writing with regards to the letter by MJ Brown in Issue 21 about the Atari Jaguar and the N64. As a trainee Systems Technician I happen to know a piece of information that seems to have slipped by many people. The Jaguar isn't really a 64bit machine. It actually contains two main processors, a 32bit graphics chip and a 32bit sound chip. These chips were given the imaginative nicknames Tom and Jerry for some strange reason. However, this means the Jaguar is only a 32bit machine like the PlayStation or Saturn, not a 64bit machine like the N64. But rest assured the Jaguar is a fine and high quality piece of hardware, shame about the lack of software support. Kevin T Hill
Leicestershire

Yes, just like the Atari Falcon and the Lynx handheld machines before it...

THE END'S IN SIGHT

That's it, after a dozen years of reading computer mags I feel that someone has to ask. Why, oh why, do you show us the ending to games before we can play them. Fair enough some people may not be able to reach the endings by themselves, but give us a chance first. This applies to both cheats and reviews, nothing annoys me more than being shown the final boss in their full glory before I have bought the game. It takes a lot of fun out of games like *Tekken* and *Resident Evil* when you show Devil Kazuya and the Tyrant. OK, give us hints that they exist to whet our appetites but have your writing skills dropped so much over the years that you have to give everything away, (and don't say 'try not looking at the tips' because I always see them by accident, and if you miss half the reviews out what's the point

RAGE RACER'S GOT RUBBISH GRAPHICS AND SOUNDS LIKE A CAT BEING STRANGLER. BUT WE DIDN'T SAY THAT, HONEST. IT WAS CHRIS HARKER. GET HIM, NOT US.



Each to his own, but we don't agree. Rage Racer was, and still is, very popular with the Plus team, and while the PAL version was a tad disappointing due to the lack of optimisation, we still feel it rates as one of the best arcade racers we've

in buying mags?) Sorry, I just feel so strongly about it, and out of all the mags yours is the least guilty, BUT YOU STILL DO IT.

Darren Ketteringham, Basingstoke

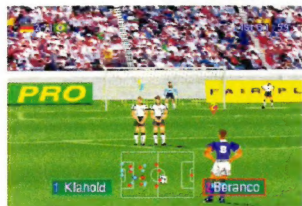
Fair comment. We're now trying to limit giving too much away in reviews, and will also be timing our playing guides to within two weeks after a game has been released. Just enough for people to start getting stuck, in fact...

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

In Issue 9 Volume 2 you gave *ISS Pro* an overall score of 92 and you also gave it the title of best footie game for the PlayStation, but in saying that you gave *Olympic Soccer* and *Adidas Power Soccer* a score of 93 and *Actua Soccer* and *Fifa 96* a score of 92. Why do you give it the title of the best footie game when you give it a score that is beaten by two other titles?

Since you started the section *Solved*, I haven't bought one of the titles you 'solved'. Please bring back more of the tips.

Darren Crawford, Dublin



It's all a matter of timing. When the PlayStation first came out, there were a glut of soccer games. FIFA '96 appeared, and while slow was still an impressive showcase for what the Sony machine could do at the time. Then Actua came out six weeks later and was significantly better in terms of speed and moves. Thus it scored higher. However, Actua was very limited in its control due to the motion-capture taking ages to start and finish, by which time Adidas arrived and played it off the field. Adidas was still flawed in places, however, so it scored the same (93%) but was generally a better game. Olympic Soccer then arrived and blew them all away, but bearing in mind technical advancements (a year had passed by then), it scored 92% because games in general had come a long way, but Olympic

looked primitive. Then we come to ISS Pro. It looks the biz, but is also flawed. Thus, although it scored the same as Olympic, it is generally the better game but doesn't really deserve a higher score.

BUGGED OUT

I am writing to respond to the letter printed in volume 2 issue 9 of PlayStation Plus from Glenn O'Connell, PR manager for Psygnosis.

He states in his letter that the replay function in *Destruction Derby 2* was removed from the final game because of feedback from their Q&A dept. He says this was done to 'ensure a bug-free release' and to 'show Psygnosis' commitment to releasing thoroughly tested product into the marketplace'. You have failed to live up to this claim.

There is another more obvious bug which has been overlooked. If you are travelling at high speed and aim for another car you are more than likely to travel straight through the car without leaving a scratch and instead hit the barrier. How could something so obvious not be picked up?

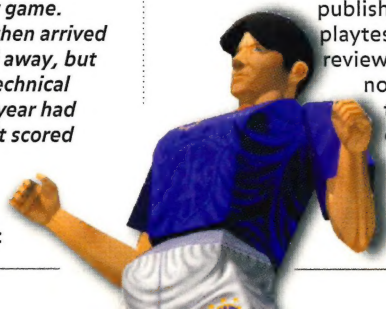
Another bug I would like to raise is in *WipeOut*. Another 'thoroughly tested product', I presume? If you come into contact with another craft, you seem to interlock with no hope of escaping. Then both you and the opponent head for the barrier. You collide with the barrier but the other craft doesn't. Instead it flies through the barrier, off the track and then flies through it again, back onto it. Again, very annoying, very obvious but not noticed.

I do agree that *Formula 1* has been mistreated in being called the most bugged game in history, with only the pit-stop bug being the genuine one. But it was so easy to notice it's laughable.

It has been said that games take approximately 18 months to develop. What I can't understand is that during this time going through programmers, developers, publishers, distributors, playtesters and games reviewers these bugs were not noticed but the customer who buys the game finds them within five minutes of play.

Dean Pratt, Hertford.

BEST FOOTBALL GAME? ISS PRO, INNIT. SO WHY DID IT SCORE LESS THAN ADIDAS? SAYS DARREN CRAWFORD. UM, WE'LL LET THE EDITOR ANSWER THAT ONE...



FAQ

THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH ARE, ONCE AGAIN, MET WITH STRAIGHT ANSWERS.

Q After reading your small article on Psygnosis' new platformer *Rascal*, I would like to know if it would be compatible with the analogue joypad? Also how much will the pad cost?

A It seems likely *Rascal* will be analogue pad compatible. Sony have yet to set a price for the device yet, though.

Q Please could you tell me if EA Sports are planning to produce a horse or greyhound racing game. We are inundated by soccer, tennis, American football and athletics games. I'm sure there would be plenty of PlayStation owners who would enjoy horse or greyhound racing games.

A No news as of yet. Cricket is the next sport EA Sports plan to tackle.

Q I am enquiring about the game *Premier Manager 97* and I would be very happy if you could try and answer these questions for me. How many countries can you pick from? When will it be released? Can you qualify for Europe by coming first in the league or a bit below first place or winning a cup competition? Can you buy players from all over the world? And how many more management simulations are coming out?

A Details regarding the PlayStation version of *Premier Manager* are scarce at the moment. The release date and firm content information have yet to be decided, but it does seem likely all the Premier sides and current player rosters will be included.

Q Football sims: I want good commentary, great graphics, and great gameplay of the simulation as opposed to the arcade variety. I'd also like real teams and players' names, because then my friends who like to pretend they've outgrown such things, but who do like football will be more interested. But which game do I buy? Whose review can I trust? Please help an old, sad person.

A As far as I'm concerned nothing can beat *ISS Pro*. It may not be perfect, but it's as near as dammit.

SMUG SO-AND-SO...

I read with interest about the problem of 'disc hopping' on FMV sequences. I bought my PlayStation last October and just recently mine too started hopping. Then a friend told me about a lens cleaning kit you can buy which, for £9, cleared up all the hopping. The kit also contains something to clean your discs with.

I now have trouble-free FMV (ha ha) I hope that helps. G Cheadle, Dunstable.

Well, it certainly beats flipping the machine on its side!

FLATTERY, FLATTERY

I've been keeping a keen eye on most, if not all, of the PS mags on the shelves due to

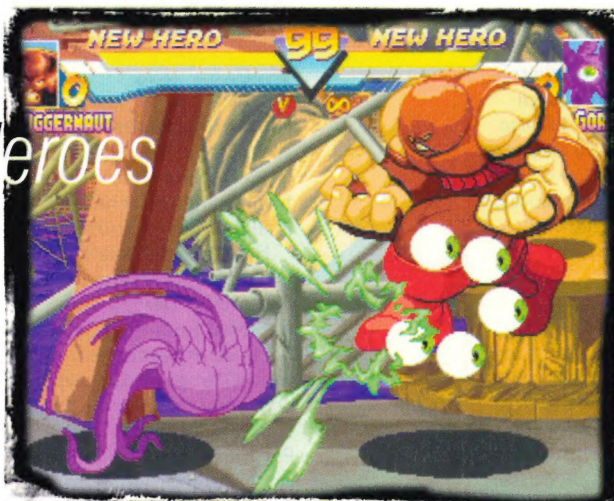
my oversized hunger for PS games (import at that) and after spending a small fortune on mags I've now decided on one, namely yours. Not only have I found out good news but been aware of of the good and bad import games (plus that video clinched it). There are far too many mags with crap news and bull cheats. Be warned, I'm now a reader solely of your mag, expect more letters expressing my hunger for the highest score, first position, highest combo and fastest lap time. Seek and destroy!!! (*Rage Racer* class six is mine). Thanks for your effort and time out. S Tanner, Bordon

Er, cheers!

Next Month

Marvel Super Heroes

CAPCOM'S CORKING COIN-OP BEAT 'EM UP IS COMING TO THE PLAYSTATION AFTER YEARS IN DEVELOPMENT. IT LOOKS COOL, BUT THE MEATY GAMEPLAY IS EVEN TASTIER. CHOOSE FROM ONE OF TEN MARVEL HEROES AND BATTLE IT OUT AGAINST DOCTOR DOOM AND HIS EVIL COHORTS. CHECK OUT THE EXCLUSIVE FIRST LOOK NEXT MONTH.



Street Fighter EX Plus

FIGHTING FUDDY-DUDDIES RYU AND KEN ARE RENDERED IN 3D FOR THIS STARTLING CONVERSION OF THE SMASH-HIT ARCADE GAME. THIS PLAYSTATION MONSTER BOASTS ALL THE FIGHTERS, SPECIAL MOVES AND ARENAS OF THE ORIGINAL COIN-OP, AND THEN SOME! DHALSIM AND SAKURA STEP INTO THE FRAY, PLUS THERE'S A BONUS STAGE UNIQUE TO THIS CONVERSION. CHECK OUT THE FULL LOW-DOWN NEXT MONTH.



G-Police

PSYGNOSIS HAS BEEN TOUTING THIS GAME AS THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER ONE, FIND OUT WHY NEXT MONTH AS WE REVIEW THIS URBAN CYBER-PUNK FLYING GAME WHICH BOASTS SOME OF THE BEST LOOKING LIGHTING EFFECTS AND WEAPONS AROUND. THIS LOOKS LIKE IT SHOULD BE ON EVERY SHOOT 'EM UP FREAK'S WISH LIST.



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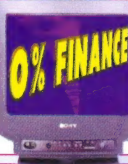
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